

(3.)
Man's Righteousness, NO Cause or
Part of his JUSTIFICATION.

BEING A
S E R M O N

On EPHES. ii. 8.

For by Grace are ye saved, through
Faith.

Extracted from the Works of
Mr. JOHN SIMPSON.

The Fire shall try every Man's Work, of what Sort
it is, 1 Cor. iii. 13.

Wisdom is justified of her Children, Mat. xi. 19.



L O N D O N :

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R E A D E R,

THE Author preach'd and printed the Works out of which this is extracted, nigh an hundred Years ago, and by them, he, tho' Dead, yet speaketh. And however strange the Doctrine herein contained, may seem to those who build their Hopes upon inherent Righteousness: Yet it is none other than the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Doctrine of the Reformation, and the only Doctrine that tends (contrary to the Judgment of carnal Reason) to Uprightness of Heart and Life, and whoever conceives otherwise of this Doctrine understands it not. It is founded upon this Principle, that we must discover God's Love to us in Christ Jesus, that he has already saved us, before we can truly love God or our Neighbour. This our Saviour inculcates to Simon the Pharisee in the Parable of the two Debtors, Luke vii. 41. and in many other Places of Scripture. I purpose shortly (with our Saviour's Leave) to print two more of this Author's Sermons on the same Text; may he sprinkle this with his Blood; and explain it by his Spirit to the Heart of every Reader,

So wishes your Servant,

In the Lord Jesus Christ,

WILLIAM CUDWORTH.

I have read the following Sermon, and recommend it with all my Heart, to all, as the most wholesome Doctrine of Jesus Christ, of which Doctrine, I am also a Witness, and set to my Seal that it is true.

J. CENNICK.

SERMON I.

EPHES. ii. 8.

For by grace ye are saved, through faith.

THERE are two things which men ought chiefly to know, their misery by sin; and their happiness by the grace of God in Christ. And by the wicked unfaithfulness of our memories we are more apt to forget these two things, than to forget any other points whatever. Γνωθὶ σεαυτὸν, *Know thyself*, is a lesson as difficult, as it is old and common. How hard a matter is it for a man to remember himself, as to know what he is in himself? the king of *Macedonia* thought it needful, that his page should every morning put him in remembrance, that he was a mortal man. And every spiritual man doth find it necessary, that the spirit daily should become his remembrancer, to put him in mind that he is a sinful man. So likewise it is a hard matter, without the power, and assistance of the spirit, always to know, the rich, full, and free grace of God, as it is held forth in the gospel to poor sinners. The last of these, as it is the most sweet and excellent lesson, so with the greater difficulty it is retained in our memories. This is a doctrine, which if it were preached unto us every day, we should forget it every day. The daily teaching and hourly learning of it, cannot wholly free us from the ignorance of this truth. But as far as we are carnal and fleshly, we are strangers to the knowledge of it. So that he that thinks he perfectly knows the doctrine of justification by faith alone, I dare profess to that man, that he knows nothing of this doctrine of justification as he ought to know. As long as we live upon the earth, we may be learners of this doctrine. *Paul* after he had been a scholar, and an aged teacher in the school of Christ many years, did then profess, that he endeavoured to forget his own works, and legal righteousness.

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ness, in reference to his justification, and pressed forward to know more of the mystery of Christ, labouring to be found in the righteousness which is of God by faith, *Phil. 3. 10.* From these Words,

First, I shall endeavour to prove negatively, that there is no justification by works. And then shew how it is by grace ; and then how it is in a way of believing.

At this present, I shall observe this method.

First, I will shew that we are not saved by works, I mean, by the works of the law.

Then I shall shew, that we are not saved and justified by works, which are the fruits of faith, or done under the covenant of grace.

Thirdly, I shall shew, that we are not saved by works, in which we yield obedience to any gospel ordinances, though they be ordinances appointed by the Lord Jesus Christ himself to be practised by the saints. I take in this, because I have found in my own spirit, and in many that I have dealt with, a secret and subtle kind of Popery, by which we are apt to attribute something to the practice of ordinances, in reference to our justification. And hence it is that people are ready to run into every new way of worship, which is brought to light, thinking that unless they find out the right discipline, and government of Jesus Christ, the right baptism, and ordinances, they are not true Saints, nor sufficiently justified. Therefore I shall take in this too, to shew, that as we are not justified by more inward, and spiritual works ; so neither are we justified by any outward observation of ordinances, or submitting to any command of the Lord Jesus Christ, but only by our obedience to the first and principal command of the gospel, by which we believe justification by grace through Christ without works.

For the first of these heads, I shall briefly shew, 1. We are not saved by works, and I shall only lay down four or five considerations for the confirming of this, that we are saved, and justified before God, and in the court of our own conscience, without any works whatsoever.

The first consideration may be this ; we cannot be justified by works, or by the law ; because there was never any man had a legal righteousness, but the man Christ Jesus.

fus. This is *Paul's* undeniable conclusion, laid down in *Rom. iii. 23.* *All have sinned, and come short of the glory of God.* The devout *Jew* as well as the prophane Gentile, is brought in, before the tribunal of God, as a guilty sinner, coming short of such a glorious righteousness, which the law doth require of him, that he may be justified under it. The Gentile never walked according to the written law of nature, which is written in his heart, nor the *Jew*, according to the law of his Maker, written in tables of stone.

All the works of the law may be reduced to two heads.

The first are those works that we do in obedience to God, to shew our love to him.

Secondly, the works that we do, to shew our love to our neighbour.

Now, if we take works, in either of these two respects, I shall shew, that all the men and women in the world, come short of such a legal righteousness, and perfection, that the holy, just, and pure law of God requires.

It will be clear, that no man ever loved God as he ought. God doth command us, that we should love him with all our heart, and with all our strength, with the whole stream of our affections. But what man did ever love God in that manner? suppose a wife should entertain many thousand lovers besides her husband, could any say, that that wife loved her husband? so many sins as we have, so many lovers we have, so the Scripture calls them, *Jer. iii. 1.* *Thou hast play'd the harlot with many lovers;* that is, thou hast followed many sins and lusts, base and vile corruptions. Now, it is thus with all the men in the world; we have all gone a whoring from our God; so that though all men, yea, even *Turks* and *Heathens* pretend to love God, the great God that made them, yet there is no man that ever loved God as he ought. That man that thinks he ever loved God as he ought, and as the law requires, he is very blind, and not enlightned to this day, to see the purity, and spirituality of the righteous law of the just and high God.

Suppose a subject should always contrive rebellion, and conspire against the person of his king, as desirous to take

away his life, and to pull the crown from his head; will any say, that this subject loves the king; thus it is with all men; we are all traitors and rebels against the king of Heaven; if we had strength, we would take the crown from the head of God, and set it upon the head of the Devil. If it were in our power, God should not reign, and be king in the world, but the Devil. This is in the heart of wicked flesh, it brings forth nothing else; it loves itself and the Devil, but hates, loaths, and abhors God, and had rather that the Devil should sit on the throne, than God the father, and the Lamb at his right hand. So that a man being unable to obey the law of God, God cannot justify him by his law, but must pronounce him a rebel; for sin is rebellion, and spiritual high treason against God. In *Ezek. ii.* when God sent the Prophet to teach the people, he tells him what people he should meet with, he saith they were such as would not hear him, such as would slight him, and would not indure to hear sound and good doctrine, and calleth them rebels. *And he said unto me, son of man, I send thee to the children of Israel, to a rebellious nation, that have rebell'd against me, even to this very day.* You see, sin is called rebellion in the word of God.

But some will say, certainly, I was never such a rebel as you make me; I apprehend not that I ever hated God in such a manner.

Ans. If thou dost not see how thou abhorrest God, and how in the flesh thou lovest the Devil more than God, thou hast not to this day, a sight of the just and pure will of God. For it is not enough that thou abstain from gross sins and prophaneness, that makes a man scandalous to the eye of the world; but thou must abstain from every sin, from every vain thought, or else the law will pass the sentence of condemnation on thee as a rebel. If it were possible that a man could so live on earth, that he should never dishonour God in any action; that he should never dishonour God by any word of his mouth; but all his words should be to the glory of that God that made him, and to the glory of that wisdom of the father, by which he made all things; yet if this man should have but a sinful ungodly rising in his heart against God, the law would take

take no notice of all the good deeds of this man, and all the good words that he hath spoken to the glory of God, but the law would condemn him for that sinful thought in his spirit. Therefore you shall find, that not only sinful words and actions, are called traiterous words, and rebellious actions in scripture, but evil thoughts concerning God, are treason against God; the law of God reacheth the heart and spirit of a man, so that if there be a sinful thought, the spiritual and holy law of God, condemns a man as a rebel for that thought. *Jer. v. 23. This people hath a revolting and rebellious heart.* The law doth not condemn a man only for rebellion in words and actions, but for rebellion in the heart. It is not enough for us outwardly to conform to what the law requires, but we must have obedient hearts; if there be any rebellion in the heart, we are condemned as though we had sinned against God in words and actions.

The law doth not only condemn a man for adultery, by which he defiles his neighbour's wife. A man may be an adulterer, and yet not an eunuch; if a man have but an adulterous glance with his eye at the sight of a woman, if he hath but a sinful thought arising in his heart, the glorious law of God thunders in the face of that man, and lightens in the countenance of that man, and will utterly destroy him for his sin. The law is like the Priest and *Levite*, *Luke x.* that pass'd by the man that was robb'd and wounded by thieves. It is Christ alone who poureth in the oyl of his gospel into the wounds of sinners, for to heal and refresh them. The law rightly and spiritually understood, is a ministry of death (*Languorem ostendi, non aufert, Aug.*) It is the gospel which is the ministry of life and salvation. And if we thus look upon the law of God, and rightly understand it, it is clear and evident, that there was never any man that loved God. Sin is a hatred of God, so many sins as thou committest, so much hatred of God thou discoverest. Our love is shew'd by keeping the commandments of God; so by breaking the commandments of God, we discover and manifest that hatred that is in us against the most holy God. So that if you consider this, that you never loved God yet, you cannot comfort yourselves in your love to God; but must abase yourselves for your

neglecting of the doctrine of justification. When God shall give you light to see himself and his son, you will find, that that which you call love to God (in your blind ignorance) is hatred of God, and rebellion against him.

Secondly, consider, that there is no man that ever loved his neighbour as he ought. The law of nature, and the written law of God require, that every man should do to others, as he would that they should do to him : but there was never any man that did so. If it were possible for a man to live so, as that he should never wrong his neighbour, or his brother, by any unjust action, or by any word spoke against his brother. But where is the man that can stand forth, and truly affirm it? yet he may be charged by the law, if he hath had any evil thoughts against him in his heart. For the law is spiritual, the law reacheth the heart ; and the law will condemn this man, as a man that hates his brother ; for the law takes notice of this, in particular ; as you shall find, *Zeck. vii. 10. Oppress not the widow, nor the fatherless, nor the poor, and let none of you imagine evil in your hearts against his brother.* The Law forbids imagining evil against our brother in our hearts. So that if once in all the days of thy life, thou hast had but one uncharitable thought of any man, when thou hadst no ground at all for it, thou hast imagined evil in thy heart against thy brother, and art a transgressor of the law ; for thou walkest contrary to thy rule and light.

I appeal to thee, wouldest thou have a man think evil of thee, when he hath no just cause? thou wilt say, I would have no man think evil of me, or harbour an uncharitable thought in his breast against me : so then if thou hast an uncharitable rising in thy spirit against any man or woman in the world, thou comest short of the righteousness, holiness, and perfection of the law, and so there is no salvation for thee by the law : if a man consider what the law is, he shall find no comfort in the world by looking upon himself, and his best performances in the glass of the law ; but he shall find that all have sinned, are haters of God, fighters against God, haters of his children, and enemies to their neighbours.

That

That as Christ said to the Scribes and Pharisees, *John vii. 19. Did not Moses give you a law, and none of you keep it?* so I may speak to all men and women in the world; the just and righteous God, as the creator that may require obedience from his creature, hath given us a just and holy law; all that he commands is consonant to reason and equity. Thou canst not deny, but that it is equal thou shouldest do to all men, as thou would that they should do to thee. But we have all sinned, and have broken this just and righteous law of God; therefore by this it appears, that there is no justification for a man by the law or his own works.

Thirdly, Another consideration may be drawn from this; it is not any whit necessary, that any man should have any works at all to bring with him unto God for his justification. There is a fulness and sufficiency in the grace of God, and in Jesus Christ, so that there is no need of any works that we should bring for our justification.

The robe of Christ's righteousness, is such a compleat garment, that there needs no patches of our own to be sewed to it. You shall find God speaking of his own grace in *Isaiah, Isa. xliii. For mine own Name sake, I will forgive thy sins, and will remember thy iniquities no more.* It is not for our works sake, if it be only of his grace. He saith, *his arm is mighty and strong.* As the Arm of God's justice, is a mighty arm, by which he crushes and breaks in pieces all wicked and ungodly men; so his arm is mighty to bring salvation. *And he hath laid help upon one that is mighty, Psal. lxxxix.* Seeing the mightiness of God's arm is to bring salvation to his people, he is mighty to save, *Zeph. iii. 17.* and he will save to the utmost, the worst and chief of sinners, without any righteousness, or holiness of their own. Therefore it follows, that it is not needful nor necessary, that a man do good works, that he may be justified and saved.

We have a rule in philosophy, that it is vain and frivolous to do that by many things, that may be done by few; seeing God hath discovered an all-sufficiency in his own grace; it is vain therefore to seek justification by many things, *Psal. cxxx. 7. There is mercy with God, and plen-*

teous redemption: No need therefore of man's righteousness.

If thou hast been a slave to many sins, to vile lusts, and base corruptions; pride, vain-glory, hypocrisy, swearing, uncleannels, &c. *There is plenteous redemption.* God can redeem thee from all thy sins, that thou hast been accustomed unto many years. He is able to redeem thee out of the hands of all thy corruptions, that hold thee fast in bondage and slavery. Wherefore there being such a sufficiency in grace, it is not needful or necessary, that a man do good works, that he may be justified.

The fourth consideration may be this; Almighty God doth not require us to do good works that they should justify or save us. I confess in the letter of the word, God seems to require them. When he speaks in the language of the law, he saith, *Do this, and live, &c.* But in the ministry of the gospel, which is the only ministry of salvation, God doth not require thee to do any thing that thou may'st be saved, or justified. The law sets thee to work, and is never satisfy'd; but the gospel bids thee do nothing at all. This is the tenor of the gospel, believe in the name of the Lord Jesus, and be confident to be justified only by his Name. The Apostles when they preached, endeavoured to beat men off, from their own works and performances, in the point of justification. When the goaler said; *What shall I do to be saved?* Paul bids him not to work, but to believe in the Lord Jesus. So in Isa. lv. 3. God reprehends men that spend their time for that, which is worth nothing, laying out so much time in acting, and doing, for justification and salvation, and in the mean while, neglecting the glorious and precious gospel of grace by his Son. *Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? Wherefore do ye spend the strength of your bodies and spirits in working, labouring and tiring out your days under the spirit of bondage, that ye may be justified, and saved? You spend your money for that that is not bread; you shall never have a piece of bread from the law for this; you shall never satisfy the law, it will not give you a crumb of comfort, work, and do what you can. Hearken unto me, and eat that which is good, and let your Soul delight*

delight itself in fatness. Foolish, and ignorant people; they take pains to satisfy their spirits, and to get comfort, by making long prayers, and observing fasting days, and giving alms to the poor, endeavouring to love God and Saints, that they may be saved; but they labour for that that will not profit, for that, that is not bread.

If duties could satisfy, why did Christ die? If we could be saved by the law, why was the gospel made known? Therefore he points them to the gospel; *Hear, and your soul shall live.* That is, hear the word of God's grace, believe that God will pardon your sins for his name's sake, and not for any works or righteousness in your selves. Believe that Christ came to save sinners, ungodly sinners, the worst of sinners, the chief of them: believe this, and your souls shall live. If any bid thee work, that thou mayst be justified; to get love to the brethren, to get a good conscience to God and men; he setteth you upon a labour that will not profit you. The voice of God is, *Hear, and your souls shall live*; believe that which is reported concerning this Christ, who was born of a woman, though the eternal Son of God, and was manifested in the flesh, and hath borne the sins of sinful flesh; and hath made an end of all iniquity, and brought in, everlasting righteousness. In believing this doctrine, we are assured of his love. And this God bids us preach, and nothing else for justification, ceasing from our selves, our works, our righteousness, our performances, resting on his love, setting foot on his grace, disclaiming our doings, not coming to him in the sight of our works, and our love, but of his goodness, as it is displayed in Christ.

Fifthly, It is positively forbidden, and God reproves men for it; he shews them that they undo their souls to eternity, if in a secret way they rest upon their own works. *Israel which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness. Wherefore? Because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law,* Rom. ix. 31, 32. He doth not say, that they did directly seek salvation by the law, but indirectly, *ὡς ἐξ ἔργων νόμου, sed tanquam operibus legis*, as it were by the works of the law. Works are not only not required, but forbidden. God doth not bid us to work,

but he forbids us to work for justification. It is not he that worketh, that is justified, but he that worketh not, but *believeth in him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness*, Rom. iv. 5. When the Apostle presseth men to believe, and perswadeth them to entertain the doctrine of grace that he preached; in those exhortations there is a virtual forbidding of working for life. When he bids them only to believe, *Act. xvi. 3.* it is as much as if he had bid them not to work. Consonant to that speech of his; *A man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Christ*, Gal. ii. 16. He excludeth works, that he may establish men in the doctrine of faith, and prohibiteth working for justification.

Lastly, We are not to desire the presence of good works that we may be justified. A man is not only to go thus far, to be convinced that he is not justified by works; but he is to be convinced of this, that the presence of good works are not needful and necessary to him when he comes to God for justification. I am not only to profess, that my works have no influence into my justification, or are the cause of it, but that good works in the presence of them, are not needful and necessary to justification.

Good works are inefficacious to justification, and not needful to be present, in the person that is to be justified. Here some fly off from the truth, they acknowledge that we are not justified by works, yet they require the presence of good works in the person who is to be justified. But when the Spirit comes, he shews us that we are to come to the throne of grace, not as men already made righteous, and holy, but as men unrighteous, and unholy, to be made holy by Jesus Christ. So that good works are not necessary as a qualification, or disposition in the person to be justified.

This is that glorious gospel, which carnal reason cannot apprehend, man's learning cannot reach, which the world's wisdom accounteth foolishness, and which the devil and worldly men will always oppose and persecute. What saith the zealous Pharisee, Will the God of love justify him that hates him? Will the God of justice sitting upon the throne pronounce the sinner guiltless? Yea, Pharisee, he will. What saith the scripture, *He justifieth the*

the ungodly. What is an ungodly man, but he that hates God, that is an enemy to God, that doth not for the present love God? And when a man looks to his grace, he must look on himself as an unrighteous, as an unholy, ungodly man; He is not bound to come as the Pharisee, but as the Publican; He is not to come thus qualified, I love God, and the people of God, I desire to obey God, I am thus qualified, therefore I shall be justified, and no sinful man, that hath not these qualifications to fit him for justification. God bids sinners while they are in their blood, *to live*, Ezek. xvi. 6. Christ cometh to call sinners to repentance, or changedness of heart by the discoveries of grace. For God doth not command us, to come as men loving him, or loving his people, that we may be justified; but when we see our selves sinners, ungodly, and the chief of sinners, then he commands us to come to the throne of grace, and offers justification and salvation to us freely without works; as *Paul* saith, *This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief*, 1 Tim. i. 15. Πρῶτος ἐγώ. I am the first of sinners; so it is in the *Greek* (*Primus non tempore, sed malignitate*) The first not in time, but in sin and malignity. This is the truth, which *Paul* preached, and which he accounted, not only worthy of acceptation, but all acceptation, for the sweetness and excellency of it. If other truths are worthy of acceptation, this is worthy of all acceptation. If a man seeth that he hath a heart that will not suffer him to love God, that he hates the people of God, yet heareth the gospel preached, that there is grace offered to sinners, to the chief of sinners; if this man believe, if he come and trust the grace of God, he hath as good an assurance for heaven, as heaven can give, as God gives to any that he intends to save, and make happy with himself to eternity.

By this we see, that we are not to bring good works, because their presence is not necessarily required. Though we see all evil present with us, and all good absent, we may rest upon the promises of grace for justification, which is the plain direct way to true and perfect holiness.

Now in the next place, I shall give you considerations, to prove that we are not justified by works that are done after conversion. This will appear as clearly as that which I have delivered concerning the needlessness of the works of the law, for our justification before our justification.

The first reason which I shall lay down is this ; those things are not the cause of justification which follow justification and true faith : but good works follow justification and true faith ; therefore good works are not the causes of justification. The cause precedes the effect ; good works are the effect of justification ; right reason therefore will teach us, that they cannot precede justification. The work of the justification of a sinner, is done and completed, before works are done, and therefore works can have no hand in our justification. That old rule is as old as the doctrine of justification, and as true as it is old, *Bona opera non præcedunt justificandum, sed sequuntur justificatum* ; Good works do not precede in the person who is to be justified, but follow the person that is justified. From which it will follow, that a man is not justified for good works that follow faith, because he is justified before he hath those good works : good works in order of nature, following true faith ; true faith working by love, *Gal. v. 6.* I am not to love that I may believe, but I must believe God's love, that I may love God, *John iv. 19.* We love him, because he first loved us. We are first purged from dead works by believing, and then we serve the living God, *Heb. ix. 14.* God hath sworn that justification shall go before good works, *Luke i. 73.* He first delivereth us from our sins, our souls deadly enemies, and then *we serve him without fear in holiness and righteousness*, as *Zachariah*, being filled with the holy spirit, doth sweetly pour forth the holy water of this soul-refreshing truth, *Luke i. 74, 75.* He hath redeemed us from all iniquity, to purify us to himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works. Faith which looketh upon the grace of him who is invisible, is the root, good works are the fruit, there must be the root before the fruit.

But some men may say, may we not see the fruit before

before we see the root ? as we see some fruit upon trees, while the root lies hid ; and from the beholding of the fruit, may we not very rationally conclude, that there is a root : so from the beholding of our good works, the fruit of true faith, may we not conclude, that there is faith, though it be not in itself visible to us.

To this I answer ; that this similitude proves not the thing ; for though it be a truth, that good works may appear first to men, yet faith is first visible to us in our own spirits ; and it is impossible that I should see the truth of good works, except I first see the truth of faith.

I will make this evident by this reason ; a man must see his good works, as done either under the law, or under the gospel, and look upon them, either in the glass of the law, or the glass of the gospel ; if a man look upon them in the glass of the law, and do rightly and spiritually understand the law, he shall be so far from drawing an assurance of his justification from them, that he shall behold himself cursed and damned, with all his good works. For the law curseth every man that continueth not in the doing of all things which are commanded by God. It is indeed a divine looking-glass, in which things to be done, or avoided, are discover'd. (*Lex est divinum speculum in quo facienda & fugienda resurgent*, Aug.) but it will sentence us to death for the least spot or wrinkle which it doth discover ; so that it is impossible, that a man should see himself justified in the glass of the law.

But thou wilt say, he may look upon his love, sincerity, and works, in the glass of the gospel.

And to this I answer, that if he look upon them in the glass of the gospel, which is Jesus Christ, then he must put himself under the gospel, and look upon himself, as a man in Christ, that so he may see his works good by Jesus Christ ; which he will never be able to see without the eye of faith, which seeth things invisible, *Heb. xi.* and by which we look upon Christ, *1 John ii. 1.* dwell in Christ, *Ephes. iii. 17.* live in Christ, *Gal. ii. 19.* And do living works, acceptable to God by the life of Christ in us, *Heb. xi. 4.* *By faith with open face we behold as in a glass the glory of the Lord, and are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, 2 Cor. iii. 18.* and see that our
good

good works are the effects of Christ's love, discovered in himself and in his gospel to our souls. And therefore when *John* doth inform us, that we shall know that we know him, if we keep his commandment. He doth propose believing, as the first commandment of God, without which we cannot assure ourselves, that we are obedient to his other commandments, 1 *John* iii. 23. *This is his commandment, that we believe in him whom he hath sent.* Good works after a man hath faith, are not the cause of justification, but the consequent; they follow a man's justification; they do not precede the act of justification; they neither precede the act of God's grace, by which he justifieth a sinner, neither do they precede justification in the court of conscience: But being justified by faith, we have peace (*Rom.* v. 1.) in our consciences. This was the doctrine which was frequently preached by those heavenly carpenters, which did first strike at the horns of the beast, *Ut dilectio oriatur, necesse est præcedere fidem, hoc est, fiducia misericordiae.* It is necessary, saith *Melancthon*, that faith, which is a confidence of God's mercy, do precede love. And another place, (*Non nititur fides nostra dilectione, sed tantum misericordia promissa, ut constet, nec existere dilectio potest nisi sit apprehensa remissio.*) Faith is not grounded upon our love, but the promised mercy of God; so that it is manifest, that there cannot be true love, unless remission of sins be first apprehended.

Another reason is from the imperfection of works wrought by a man after he is justified; if any man that is justified, look on his works, and do not behold them in the glass of the Gospel, he shall read his own condemnation for his works. Therefore seeing there is such imperfection in the works that we perform, that the best of us are unprofitable servants, and that the most holy amongst us, do that for which he may be damned every day, if God should not deal with us in the gospel, but in the law; it will follow, that a man cannot be justified by the works that he doth after he hath faith, and is converted, and doth works which are wrought by the spirit of grace.

I come now to the next consideration, which is this; that we are not justified by the practice of any gospel-ordinances, which are commanded by the Lord Jesus Christ.

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There are some, who it may be, are convinced that they are not justified by works, yet I know not what new kind of popery they have found out ; for they think to please God by submitting to ordinances, and finding out the true discipline and government of Christ's church ; therefore you shall find a kind of spirit of bondage in them, if they be not satisfied concerning the true discipline, government, and ordinances of the Lord Jesus Christ. Wherefore I shall endeavour to demonstrate this, and shew clearly, that as we are not justified by works before, or after conversion, so we are not justified and saved, by the submitting to any ordinance of the Lord Jesus Christ. Salvation is not in these, there is nothing to be found in these available to justification. Forms of government and ordinances, do not make men christians, but a lively faith in the Lord Jesus. When *Caius Marius Victorinus* told *Simplicianus*, that he was turned from heathenism to christianism, and he replied, that he would not believe him, unless he saw him in the congregation of christians ; he wittily thus reprehended the rashness of his speech, (*Ergone parietes faciunt christianos ?*) do your walls then make christians ? so to those that say, men are of the world, until they are under this or that form of government and ordinance, I may thus speak ; do these things make christians ? Episcopacy, presbytery (all government) is nothing, independency is nothing, dipping is nothing, but faith which worketh by love. The Apostle clearly proves this point, *Gal. v. 3. I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law ; Christ is become of none effect to you ; he shall profit you nothing. We know that Paul circumcised Timothy ; after he was a preacher of the gospel, and submitted himself to many of the rites and ceremonies of the Jews ; shaved his head, and put himself under a Jewish vow ; yet here he saith, if a man be circumcised, he is a debtor to the whole law. His meaning is this, that if a man submit to circumcision, as thinking it will any whit avail him to his justification, and salvation, that man shall not be saved by Jesus Christ, but he is a debtor to the whole law ; he is not under grace, but under the curse of the law, Acts xv. 1. When*
some

some preached that there was a necessity for men to be circumcised, and keep the law of *Moses*, that they might be justified; see how the doctrine was disrelished by the Apostles; *Peter* calleth it a tempting of God, and laying a yoke upon the necks of the disciples, which they nor their fathers were not able to bear. *Paul* though as a spiritual man, he could become all things to all men, to the *Jew*, as a *Jew*, to the Gentile as a Gentile, 1 Cor. ix. 20, 21, 22. that by all means he might save some; yet how doth he thunder and lighten in the face of those that laid too much upon the practice of outward things, denying unto them any salvation by Christ. And as he said, *If ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing*; so if any man be baptized, I may say, Christ shall profit him nothing. If any man to satisfy his conscience, desire one to dip or sprinkle him, or join himself as a member to any congregation, thinking by pleasing God, and Christ, to further his salvation in this way, he is a stranger to Christ, and unacquainted with his Gospel.

Faith is inconsistent with any thing in this sense; faith will not suffer any thing to be joined with it in point of justification; and if we will join any thing with faith for justification, that faith is nothing worth at all. If we will do any thing that we may be justified, we must do every thing. If thou wilt be a member of a church, as they speak, that thou may'st be comforted, justified, and saved, thou art bound to fulfil the whole law.

The law is well compared by one to a chain, which is linked together, and if we take one link of it, the weight of the whole chain will be upon us; so if we do any thing that we may be justified, we lay ourselves under all the bondage and slavery of the law, and are tied to do every thing in the law, that we may be justified. He that is circumcised, is a debtor to do the whole law, *Gal. v. 3. But in Christ Jesus, neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but faith which worketh by love,* ver. 6. By *circumcision*, he means all the outward privileges of the *Jews*; these do nothing avail to salvation; and by *uncircumcision*, the privileges of the *Gentiles*, baptism, and the supper. All outward privileges and pre-rogatives

rogatives, do nothing avail to justification. The kingdom of Heaven is not in these things, not *circumcision*, or *uncircumcision*, or any outward ordinances. *The kingdom of Heaven is within you.*

Another reason may be drawn from the consideration of the nature of ordinances, and our submitting our selves to them. There is not so much in that outward obedience that is given to outward ordinances, as in that obedience that is given to the moral precepts of the law, *Mark x. 19.* Our Saviour commends the young man for acknowledging that obedience to God, *loving God and his neighbour*, were more than all burnt offerings and sacrifice; *there is more in internal obedience, than in obedience to external ordinances.* From which conclusion, thus I argue; if those things that are of a more excellent nature, as, love to God, and love to our neighbour, and relieving the poor, be altogether unprofitable, inefficacious, and unavailable to justification, and salvation; then these outward works of obedience, in submitting to outward ordinances, are much less available. If the greatest works advantage nothing for justification, and salvation, then certainly the doing of inferior works, the suffering a man to dip me, and to make me a member of his church, cannot advantage me: These things are works in their own nature far inferior to the great works of the law, love to God, and to the people of God, and to the poor saints of the Lord Jesus Christ: Therefore if these works be altogether unavailable, if they can nothing further my justification; nay, if they hinder me in point of justification, if I lay any weight upon them; then certainly these inferior works can nothing further my justification, and salvation. And if a man do not practise them, according to the command of Christ, through ignorance, it is no way prejudicial to his justification, and salvation. It did not prejudice the thief that he died without baptism, that he did not receive the supper of the Lord, that he was not admitted a member of the visible church; it did not prejudice him that he had no fellowship with the saints. A man may be justified and saved, not only without the works of the law, and works after conversion, but
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he may be saved, though he do not submit himself to the practice of outward ordinances.

Therefore if any say unto you, you must be baptiz'd, or you cannot be saved, I cannot look on you as a saint, except you be baptiz'd, you must be members of a church, or else you cannot be members of Christ, I cannot acknowledge you as a brother; rather pity their ignorance, than yield to their exhortations. What a sad thing it is for men to place faintship and religion in these things, when the scripture plainly and punctually in this respect overthroweth them? *Rom. xiv. 15. The kingdom of God is not in meats and drinks, (concerning which there were many controversies and janglings in those times) but in righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.*

Since the scripture requires nothing to make a man an heir with Christ, but faith: How abominable is it to say, that a man cannot be a saint, if he do not submit to outward ordinances?

I cannot but commend what I find in *Luther*, who was zealously carried forth against some in his time, that made a rent from him in a legal way, because they differed from him about external things and ordinances, which are no just ground why saints should divide themselves from one another; who saith, "That they had brought in another kind of popery, and more dangerous than that which he had overthrown by his preaching; for as for gross popery, (saith he) mens eyes begin to be enlightened, to see the absurdities of it. But these men come in a subtle way, and pretending a necessity of submitting to forms, institutions, and ordinances, do pervert the pure and simple gospel of Christ, labouring to persuade men, that if they do not submit to the ordinances of the Lord Jesus, he would not acknowledge and confess them before his Father, and that unless they were under his government, they should not be under him for justification."

Therefore we are to be rightly informed concerning these things, and if we do submit to outward ordinances, we should not do it from legal principles, for it were better not to practise them, than to practise them from these principles,

principles, to the ruining of our souls. And they that draw disciples after them by such rigid and gospel destroying principles, will find, to their shame, that those that they have brought in by these principles, will fall away from them to their shame and infamy; for God is dishonour'd, Christ is robb'd of his grace, and the free spirit loseth his glory.

Suffer me now to make a little use, and so I shall commend you, and what hath been deliver'd to the blessing of God.

You see that we are saved by believing the gospel, without any works going before justification, or any submission to the ordinances of the gospel, which may follow it. This doth bring four sorts of people under a just reproof.

First, such as are grossly popish, maintaining justification by their own works and righteousness, or affirming that a man is not justified by faith only, but by faith and works together. These deny justification by the grace of God, and the righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ thro' faith, and set up a justification by inherent righteousness in themselves, holding that we are then justified from sin, when it is removed out of our sight, sense, feeling, lives, spirits and conversations.

Secondly, this doth serve to discover and reprove such, who would seem to be no papists, who yet in a more refined and subtle way, do preach forth the same doctrine which the others do maintain, and prefer some popish books, which are wrought with a fine and curious thread, before any books which have been publish'd, by any who have been eminent for the knowledge of God's grace in Christ through faith for justification. These are they *who, if it were possible, would deceive the very elect*; laying siege against the gospel, and the doctrine of justification, while they pretend that they are fighters for it. And these preach that we are not to look so much upon a Christ without us for justification, as a Christ within us. And that we are not justified by a Christ that is in Heaven, but by Christ within us; which Christ of theirs is nothing else, when ye are well acquainted with him, but the workings

workings of their own spirits in zeal and love to God, and when they have high thoughts of God, their will is conformable to the will of God, and they think the same things that God thinks, and submit to God in their ways. They look upon these workings, as their perfection and justification ; and this is Christ within them.

“ But we are not saved by Christ working in us, and
 “ making us obedient to his Father’s holy will ; but we
 “ are saved by the righteousness of Christ, who hath
 “ shed his blood for us.” We are not justified because
 we love God and Christ, and desire to walk in sincerity
 to glorify God ; “ but because we apprehend the Grace
 “ of God in Christ ; and therefore we love God and
 “ Christ, and desire in sincerity, to walk in all the ways
 “ that God hath made known to us in Christ.” We are
 not justified by the conformity of our will to God’s will,
 or the oneness of our will with his ; *but we are justified
 by faith.*

He that denies this, is ignorant of Christ and the gospel, and is not an honourer of Christ, but a minister of Satan and Antichrist, and a deluder of the people.

Thirdly, this is for the reproof of the hypocritical protestant, who professeth the doctrine of justification by faith without works with his tongue, but denieth it with his heart ; not daring to trust his soul in the arms of a Saviour, unless he brings good works along with him to procure his welcome and entertainment.

This man stumbles at the threshold of the door of grace, being never able to enter into the house of love ; because he will not adventure his salvation upon the promises of grace which are made to sinners, that have no works, or righteousness inherently in themselves. He will not go to God, or close with a promise of grace, unless he have the sight of righteousness in himself in the first place. He will tell you, that good works are not the matter of our justification, and yet he will not conclude that he is a justified man, until he see good works in himself. This man *following the law of righteousness, doth not attain to the law of righteousness*, because he seeketh it not
 by

by faith, but as it were by the works of the Law,
Rom. ix. 31, 32.

The Apostle speaks against this pharisaical opinion; when he saith, *We are justified by Grace through believing*, not through working. I am not bound to love God and the brethren, that I may be beloved of God; but I must believe, that I may love God, and my brother.

“The preposterous preaching of sanctification before justification for the evidencing of justification, is that which keepeth many poor creatures in bondage for many years, and ruins many souls.

How many are gone to Hell, who thought they were going to Heaven? deceiving themselves with false and unsound assurances. And fetching their comforts from the sight of their own works, and not from the grace of God in Christ, by a pure act of believing. If this were the right path to justification, we should not be justified in believing, but in loving, and working. For I seeing my love to God, should conclude God's love to me: *But, herein is love, not that we loved God, but that God loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins,* 1 John iv. 10. *And true love is obtain'd by the sight of God's free love to us in an act of believing.*

Therefore if thou hast no assurance of the love of God, but that which thou hast gotten from the sight of thine own works, and from the conclusions of thine own base and deceitful heart; as the ordinary way of some hath been, thou hast no assurance at all.

When thou shalt lay under a great temptation, thou wilt find no comfort in this assurance: And thou shalt find at the great day, *when thou shalt appear before God and Christ*, that this assurance will not be worth a Rush.

This building upon thy love to God, and not upon God's free love to thee, is to build upon a sandy foundation; and not upon Christ by faith. And if the Lord convince thee of thy folly, thou wilt lay a better foundation of joy and comfort than this can be unto thee.

For

For other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ, 1 Cor. iii.

Fourthly, This is for the reprehension of blind and ignorant formalists, who place religion rather in conformity to outward forms of government, and submission to external ordinances, than in the faith of the gospel, which is operative by love. Justification doth not lie in our obedience to the ordinances of Jesus Christ, but in Jesus Christ. We are not made saints, by being made members of any church or congregation, but by faith in the head of the church. Woe to him that maketh his obedience and submission to any ordinance the ground of his comfort, as too many zealous formalists do, who run from congregation to congregation, from one ordinance to another, to get solid comfort to their souls, apprehending that they are undone creatures, and cannot be true saints, unless they be under the true practice of all ordinances: whereas it is a plain truth, revealed in the gospel of truth, that neither submitting to an ordinance can make a true saint, nor the want of ordinances unfaint any man that is made one with Christ in believing. *He is not a Jew which is one outwardly, neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh. But he is a Jew which is one inwardly, and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter, whose praise is not of men, but of God, Rom. ii. 28, 29.* So he is a true Saint, who is not a visible member of a congregation; but *he whose life of faith is hidden in Jesus Christ. He is baptized, not whose body is washed with water; but, whose soul is washed in the blood of Christ, 1 Pet. iii. 21.* He is a good communicant, and breaks bread, who doth not break bread outwardly, but by faith doth inwardly feed upon the bread of life. We are not justified by works of the law done before or after justification, nor by yielding obedience to any command concerning outward ordinances, but by our submitting in our judgments to the truth of God's grace in Jesus Christ for justification without these.

I would not here be mistaken, as though I did speak against any saints, or any who are spiritual and faithful
in

in the observation of any external ordinances; but against zealous formalists, who do make faintship and fellowship to depend upon these things, and are not spiritually acquainted with the truth of God's grace, but are perverters of the gospel.

In the next place, here lieth consolation for all that hear me this day, in that which I have delivered, if God shall give unto them believing hearts.

Hast thou never done any good work? hast thou hated the ways of God, and his people? hast thou never looked after the discipline, government, and ordinances of Christ? Yet here is a ground for thee to come in unto Christ: we are justified by grace through believing, not through working. Therefore let it be supposed; that thou art without works, yet thou hast good ground to take comfort in that which hath been delivered; believe and thou art in a happy condition, though thou hast never done a good work. Thou art not to come to Jesus Christ as a righteous man: But thou art to come unto him, that thou may'st be made a righteous man. If thou see'st thy self a vile sinner, cast thy self into the arms of the grace of the Father by Jesus Christ, *and thou shalt be made the righteousness of God in him*, 2 Cor. v.

Promises of Grace are left by God upon record in the scripture of truth for sinners, for ignorant sinners, *Isa. xxix. 24. They that erred in spirit shall come to understanding*; For sinners that murmur against him, his ways, truths, and prophets, as it followeth in the same verse, *They that murmured shall learn Doctrine*. For backsliding sinners, *Hosea xiv. 4. I will heal their backsliding, I will love them freely. Him that cometh unto him he will in no wise cast out, & μὴ ἐκβάλω ἔξω*. Here are two Negatives in the Greek, which do strengthen the negation. *John iv. 37*. By which speech our Saviour doth assure poor sinful creatures, that if in truth they come unto him, they shall not be rejected by him; or ejected from the arms of his love and mercy.

Christ's invitation is to all sinners, All that will, may lay hold of him, not only the righteous, but the unrighteous.

teous. If thou canst not love God, thou may'st look on the grace of God, and take comfort that God loves thee, Christ came not to call the righteous, but sinners, the chiefest and vilest of sinners to repentance. Therefore come as a sinner, as the chiefest of sinners, come I say, and welcome. The Lord Jesus keeps open-house for all comers, the blind, the lame, shall not find the doors shut upon them. (They shall be welcome as sinners, that cannot be entertained as saints.)

X It is reported of *Rome's* first founder, that wanting subjects, he sent forth some, to make known his will to all people, who lived about him, that if any malefactors, or such who were oppressed in the places where they lived, did come in unto him, they should live peaceably in his kingdom, and he would protect them against any that should pursue them, and by this means he became suddenly the king of a numerous people. So Christ doth send forth his proclamations to assure sinners, and vile malefactors, that if they will come under his scepter, they shall live peaceably under his government, and that he will safe-guard them from all their enemies, which shall pursue them, and by this means his dominions are enlarged from sea to sea, and sinners do rejoice in the king of Sion. This doctrine if it were received, would answer all the objections which are raised in the hearts of men, against their happiness by Jesus Christ.

Is there any sad, comfortless soul, which would not be comforted if this truth were received? What canst thou object against thyself to bereave thyself of peace, which would not be remov'd if this were thoroughly believed. Art thou a sinner? Christ offereth himself to sinners. X Art thou an old sinner? An old sinner is but a sinner. Hast thou been a *Pharisee* like *Paul*, persecuting Christ and the doctrine of grace? a persecuting *Pharisee* is but a sinner. And *Paul* was received to mercy, that such might not be without hope of mercy, 1 *Tim.* i. 16. Art thou an hypocrite? an hypocrite may come as a sinner to Christ. Bring what objection thou canst, and a perswasion concerning the truth of God's grace shall answer it,
and

and if thou dost believe, thou hast as good an assurance as any is in Heaven, and which will hold good, when the hope of the hypocrite will come to nothing.

Let no objection keep thee from comfort, but believe what thou hast heard ; if thou art a sinner conclude not, that Christ belongs not to thee, because thou art a sinner ; but say, I am a sinner, therefore Christ belongs to me, Christ came to save sinners.

As the bright beams of the sun dispel all mists and clouds ; so the truth of this doctrine, if thou understand it in the light of the spirit, will dispel all thy doubts and objections of unbelief. They will vanish, and thou that camest hither under a spirit of bondage, shalt go away with a spirit of adoption, and assurance. The true gospel believed will quickly bring true comfort to thy soul. If any of you want comfort and assurance, it is because you believe not. Christ doth knock at the door of our hearts, and if by believing the door be opened, he will feast with us. It is unbelief which doth bolt the door, doth keep him out, and doth keep joy from us. The gates of Heaven are shut upon workers, and open to believers ; shut to those who come with money in their hands ; but open to those who are content to enter without paying any thing for their entrance ; *the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord*, Rom. vi. ult. Whoever will, may drink of the waters of life freely, Rev. xxii. 21. But if we will not drink without money, we shall not drink one drop of the water of life. It were a disgrace for a king, if none should see his palace but such who would give money. If therefore we look on Heaven as the palace of the great king of Heaven and earth, let us know that we may enter without money. It were a disgrace to the king of Heaven if he should suffer none to come into his palace, but those that would give something to come into it ; if we have nothing to give for Heaven, we have as much as God demands ; if we do nothing, we do as much as God requires.

(Manifestè beati sunt quibus sine labore, vel opere aliquo remittuntur iniquitates, & peccata teguntur. Nulla ab his requi-

requiruntur pœnitentiæ opera, nisi tantum ut credant, Ambrose) It is plain that they are blessed, unto whom without any labour or pains, sins are remitted, and iniquities covered. No works of repentance are required of these, this is only required of them, that they do believe. For he that worketh not, but believeth in him that justifieth the ungodly, *his faith is counted for righteousness*, Rom. iv. 5. So much for this time.

F I N I S.



SALVATION *only by God's Grace.*

A SECOND
S E R M O N

On EPHES. ii. 8.

For by Grace are ye saved thro' Faith.

Being an Extraſt from the Works of
Mr. JOHN SIMPSON.

*The Fire ſhall try every Man's Work, of what Sort
it is, 1 Cor. iii. 13.*

Wiſdom is juſtified of her Children, Mat. xi. 19.



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S E R M O N II.

E P H E S. ii. 8.

For by Grace are ye saved thro' Faith, &c.

I Proved the last day that there is no salvation for any Man by any Works, or Righteousness of his own, I shall now proceed in the next Place to prove, that *we are saved by Grace only.*

By grace, in this place we are to understand the free favour of God to his poor undeserving creatures That which is translated grace here, in other places is translated favour: So it is said that our blessed Lord and Saviour *increased in wisdom and stature, καὶ χάριτι παρὰ Θεῶν*, and in favour with God and men, Luke ii. ult. So it is said that Joseph found favour in the sight of Pharaoh, king of Egypt, Acts vii. 10. And it is said, that Dawid found favour before God, ver. 46. * *The grace of God is the same with his favour.* This grace,
or

* Grace is defined by P. Martyr as "the free good will of God, whereby he counteth us dear in Christ Jesus, forgiveth us our sins, and giveth us the Holy Ghost, upright life, and eternal felicity."

By grace also is understood (that particular instance of Divine favour) the actual influence and immediate operation of the Spirit of God upon the minds of men to faith in Christ, and thro' faith to holiness of heart and life. And hence also the gracious habits of soul thus obtain'd, have been called by the same name.

or free favour of God to poor creatures, is held forth to us in scripture.

First, As it is in God ; and so it is set forth to us, as that grace, and favour of his which is eternal as him-

But some (not eying rightly the Gospel mystery of sanctification) taking an unwarrantable liberty from well-intended expressions of former writers, and from a gross uptaking of the promise to give a new heart of flesh, &c. have described grace, as tho' it were a living new creature put into the man, having eyes, mouth, limbs, &c. and have hereby understood not the Gospel sanctification in Christ enjoyed by faith, but another separte thing : Which, for any dependance it has upon the enjoyment of Christ by faith, might as well be in the Deist as in the Christian.

There is an operation of the Spirit of God in effectual calling, whereby we are perswaded, and enabled, to embrace Jesus Christ, freely offered to us in the Gospel : This is not some new creature put into us, but an enabling us to receive Christ, and salvation in him ; and all true holiness of heart and life flows from Jesus Christ as actually received into, and dwelling in our hearts by faith. " The cause of good works we confess to be, not our free will, but the Spirit of the Lord Jesus, who dwelling in our hearts, by true faith, bringeth forth such works as God hath prepared for us to walk in." Old Confes. Scot. Art. 13. " When we refer the beginning of repentance to faith, we do not dream a certain mean space of time, wherein it bringeth it out : but we mean to shew, that a man cannot earnestly apply himself to repentance, unless he knows himself to be of God." Calvin's Inst. Book 3. Chap. 3. Sect. 2. This is the old Protestant account of the matter, and it is an abuse of their words to understand them otherwise.

self. And in this respect we are said to be saved from eternity, in this eternal grace and favour of his as the apostle sets it forth, *2 Tim. i. 9.* where he saith that *we are saved not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began.* This grace is the primary cause of our justification. God justifies, and saves none in time, but those who were justified and saved before him from eternity. It is said of *Abraham*, that he was the *father of many nations*, *Rom. iv. 17.* He was not then the father of many nations, if we look upon his progeny and posterity; for he had not a grand-child then; but he was the *father of many nations before him whom he believed, even God that quickeneth the dead, and calleth things that are not as if they were.* So we were saved before God in the eternal grace of God, before we had a being among the creatures. In the same sense that God is said to determine the times, and the bounds of all mens habitations from eternity, *Acts xvii. 26.* So we are said to be saved by the grace of God. Because God from eternity loved us in Christ, and saw us in his own eternal grace and favour; otherwise we should make God like unto the creature which seeth things when they are done, and are visible among the creatures, but God he foresaw things from eternity; he speaks of things as being, when indeed they have not a being among the creatures, but have a being in his own eye: And so we had a being in the grace of God, and in the eye and sight of God, before we had a being in ourselves, and a being among the creatures.

And we are in this grace of God from eternity, not for any works that God foresaw would be done by us: God did not love us from eternity, because he foresaw that we would be industrious, painful and zealous to glorify his name. There was nothing at all in the eye of God from eternity that moved God to set his grace, and favour upon us but his grace. It is contrary to truth which is affirmed by some, that God foreseeing that some men would be industrious, painful, do good works, and live holily and righteously, did therefore make choice of

them, and set his grace on them. And that foreseeing the idleness, sloth, prophaneness, ungodliness and impenitence of others, he rejected them. God, as he loves us in his grace from eternity; so this grace was placed upon us without any foresight or provision of our own works. The apostle doth clear this plainly to us in the forementioned place, where he saith, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace; intimating thus much to us, that it was only the eternal grace of God which moved God to be good and gracious to us in Christ. And so the apostle saith, *Tit. iii. 5. Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us*; that is, according to his eternal mercy and grace, he shewed favour and compassion to us, and pardoned our sins. And the expression of the apostle is worth observing, *Ephes. i. 4.* where speaking of the eternal grace of God, he saith, *That God placed his grace upon us that we should be holy, and without blame before him in love.* He doth not say that God elected us, because we would be holy, and without blame; but *he elected us that we might be holy, and without blame before him in love*: Good works are not the cause but the consequents of grace.

Nay, I add more, that as God did not foresee our good works, so not our faith neither: faith is not the cause of grace, but grace is the cause of faith. God therefore enables us to believe in time, because God loved us from eternity.

The apostle speaking of them of *Achaia* saith, that they *believed through grace*, and *Apollos helped them much that believed through grace*, *Acts xviii. 27.* It is by grace that we believe, it is not by faith that we are made partakers of grace.

Thus we are saved by grace in the purpose of God, from eternity in the eye and sight of God, who seeth all things absent as if they were present, and speaks of things before they are done, as if they were done.

In the next place, grace in the scripture is consider'd, not only as it is in God, and as it is as eternal as God himself; but the scripture speaks of the grace of God, as
it

it is manifested forth to us in Jesus Christ; and so we are saved by grace; God discovering his grace to us in his son Jesus Christ. So the Apostle speaking of grace, *2 Tim. i. 10.* saith; *But now is manifested to us by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.* He speaks first of grace, as it is in God, and as it is as eternal as God himself: then he speaks of eternal grace, manifested to us in the gospel of his dear son. It is by the preaching of the gospel, that the eternal grace of the father, in the son, is made known to us.

And this grace is called sometimes the *grace of God the father, Rom. i. 7.* Sometimes it is called the *grace of Jesus Christ*; and sometimes the *grace of them both*; because Jesus Christ is God, one God, in one divine essence with his father.

And as God in his grace is said to forgive sins, *Micah vii. Who is a God like unto thee that pardoneth sin?* saith the prophet. So Jesus Christ is said to forgive sins. the apostle bids us to *forgive one another, as Christ hath forgiven us, Col. iii. 13.* As there is grace in the father to forgive sins; so there is the same grace in the son. The apostles doubted not but that they should be saved by the grace of Christ, as well as those that were circumcised, *Acts xv. 7.* And by this grace we are saved. God discovering now his grace to us in his son Jesus Christ, the eternal son of the eternal father.

This grace in scripture is made known to us, as the sole cause of our justification and salvation. Grace is so held forth for justification, that all things, besides grace are excluded. We are justified by grace, *exclusively*, all other things being shut out. When God justifieth a man, he eyes that man, only in his own grace; and when God justifieth a man in the court of his own conscience, he strips him of all his own works, of his own love to him, and to the brethren, and gives him only a sight of his own grace.

This grace doth exclude all merit: if there were any merit in the creature, man could not be saved by grace;

the apostle clears it to us by that passage, *Rom. iv. 4. To him that worketh the reward is not reckon'd of grace, but of debt.* If a man could work, or merit any thing toward his justification and salvation, *then it were not of grace, saith the apostle, the reward is not reckoned of grace, but of debt.* If any man work, then he expects wages as due to him, he may by right, and justice claim what he deserves: so if we did work for salvation, we might require God to bestow, and give us what we had wrought for. But true grace shuts out all merit, and works in the creature: if we could bring any merit of the creature to join with his grace, *grace should be no more grace, as the Apostle, Rom. xi. 6.*

If we look upon grace as it is in God; so, before God we are saved in his eternal thoughts; he in his own purpose and grace, having elected us to justification, and eternal salvation in glory by his son Jesus Christ. Yet he never holds forth his grace to us, but in the countenance of his son Jesus Christ; in whom the glory of his justice shines bright, with the glory of his grace. He shews us that he hath laid all our sins on his son; that his justice hath received full satisfaction from the sufferings of his son for all our sins, and so comes to discover his grace to us in the pardon and forgiveness of our sins.

Thus Christ, and the apostles constantly in their preaching, discover'd the grace of the father in the son. As our Saviour to *Nicodemus*; *God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten son, that whosoever believeth on him, should not perish, but have everlasting life, John iii.* And the apostle to the *Corinthians*; *God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself, 2 Cor. v.*

God doth not make known his love for the forgiveness of sin, but by Jesus Christ. I confess that we are saved by grace in respect of God, before we know the grace of God in Jesus Christ. But we cannot see this grace, until we behold it in the face of the Lord Jesus. *We behold the love of God in giving the Lord Jesus to be the atonement, sacrifice, and propitiation for our sins, before we can read the everlasting love and favour of the father to us in his son.* Eternal love is the primary cause

cause of our salvation and justification ; but it cannot be apprehended by us, until we apprehend, *in the first place* our redemption in Jesus Christ. And when Christ is embraced as a Saviour in the arms of faith, we rise higher in our thoughts, by the power of the Spirit, and are brought to look upon the eternity of love ; and have liberty to read every line in his eternal volume, which doth concern our eternal life and salvation :

In the next place we are to consider, that in scripture, salvation is taken either negatively or affirmatively.

And take salvation in either of these acceptations. And it will be evident, that we are saved by grace.

In the first place, if we take salvation negatively, as it is a deliverance or freedom from all evil ; and in this sense we are freed from evil, only by grace. It is a true rule ; *Gratiam Christi nihil præcedit humani* : Nothing in man doth precede, or prevent the grace of God. The light and beams of grace, do dispel the clouds of our sins. Not for our sakes, but for his name's sake, he covereth our sins. It is God's prerogative to free us from sin by grace, and to remove them far from us, *Psal. ciii. 12. As far as the east is from the west, so far he removed our transgressions from us.* He only can remove sin against whom it is committed. He only can cast sin into the depths of the sea, who hath an ocean of grace in himself, in which he swalloweth them up. *Micah* is spiritually transported beyond himself in admiring this incommunicable prerogative of the God of grace ; *Micah vii. 1. 8. Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, &c ?* And who can think that he will part with this privilege, which is his delight ? for so it followeth in the same verse : *He retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in mercy.*

Secondly, if we take salvation affirmatively, for the instating of men into a condition and enjoyment of all happiness, and felicity, so we are saved by grace. We are made happy, brought from a cursed condition, into a blissful condition, from horror to joy, from hell to heaven, from the state of nature, to the state of glory, only by the grace of God. It is only by grace that we

are what we are. By grace our sins are pardon'd. By grace we have an inheritance with the saints. By grace we are the high born sons of the great king of heaven and earth. By grace we are blessed and loaded with all spiritual and temporal blessings in Jesus Christ, and are brought to the enjoyment of eternal felicity, happiness, and blissfulness. Thus we are saved by grace, and by grace alone.

One of the antients doth speak excellently to this purpose; (*Nemo se palpet, de suo Satanas est, de Deo beatus est, quid est enim de suo nisi peccatum suum?*) Let no man boast of himself, for of man's self he is a devil; by God a man is made happy; what is man of himself but sin? *Ye are saved by grace.*

Again, salvation in scripture is taken for salvation before God in the court of heaven. And it is taken for the saving of a party, in his own spirit and conscience: if we take it in the first sense, a man is saved in the court of heaven, only by grace. What is the reason, that (the accusing mouth of the law being stopped) no bill, no indictment can be brought against the elect in the court of heaven? Is it not this, because God in his grace justifieth them? This is the apostle's argument, *Rom. viii. 33. Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect, It is God that justifieth them.* τὸς ἐγκαλέσει, Grace hath cast out of heaven the accuser of the brethren, which accused them before God night and day, *Rev. xii. 10.* The accuser can bring no indictment, complaint, or accusation against the saints there. There is no sin in our consciences that can be heard to accuse us in heaven, because there is grace for our justification. God beholds his son Jesus Christ before his eye, upon whom he hath laid all our sins. And always beholding our happiness before himself in heaven, lying wrapp'd up in his own grace; doth acquaint us in his word of truth; that we are saved by grace.

Secondly, if we take salvation in the other sense; for salvation in our spirits and consciences; and in this sense we are saved by grace. There can be no salvation brought home to our hearts, but by the sight of grace.

grace. If we had the sanctification (or spiritual fruit) of all the saints which have lived since the fall of man, and should look upon it all as ours, to give comfort to our souls, and to assure us that we are in a state of salvation; and should not look above it to behold God's grace, and our sanctification (or spiritual fruit) in it, and from it, it would not give us any solid comfort, or assurance of our salvation. Nothing can shine in the heart to give it any comfort, but what doth shine and give light, in the light and beams of this grace. We never come to see our selves in a condition of safety, till we see the grace of God. *Look unto me and be saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else;* Isaiah xlv. 22. None but God can save us, and nothing but the sight of God can bring salvation to us. Still we have some objection or other against salvation, and justification, till God silence all objections by the sight of his own grace. There is that *only* in God, and in Jesus Christ, that will silence all objections.

If our conscience fly in our faces, and tell us that we have committed many thousands of sins more than we can reckon or number up, yet when God gives us a sight of himself, his son, and grace, the mouth of conscience is stopped, and we see all our sins swallowed up in his love. *Shew us the father, and it sufficeth us,* saith Philip, John xiv. 8. When God sheweth us himself, our spirits are at rest.

When grace is discover'd, and God's light doth shine upon the soul, sin, death, and damnation cannot terrify the soul. But they are filled with a spirit of joy, in believing their free justification; *who before through fear of death were subject to bondage,* Heb. ii. 15. Grace appeareth greater and stronger to bring salvation, than sin powerful to bring damnation. Our sins, and the sins of all the men of the world, being the acts of creatures are finite; but grace that justifieth us, is the grace of an infinite God, and is boundless and infinite. Men are unassured of their salvation, unless this grace be presented to the eye of their spirits. And men and devils cannot

prevail against us, to enforce us to question our justification and salvation, when we look upon it. That *peace* which *the world cannot take from us*, nor *give unto us*; that joy which neither the law, nor the works of the law can convey unto us, nor bereave us off: that salvation which damned feinds can never rob us of, is communicated to us by the beholding of God's grace in the face of the Lord Jesus. The soul, when it hath a sight of this grace, it stands *with boldness at the throne of grace*, and though it feel hellish sin in itself, yet it is able to dispute with all the devils in hell, and to maintain the freeness, fulness, and compleatness of its own justification from all sin, by the grace of God in Jesus Christ.

If the devil shall then suggest this to a man, that he is a sinner. The believing soul will make this answer: It is true, I am a sinner, but I am not terrified to desperation, because I am ungodly; but I rejoyce in this, that *God justifieth the ungodly* by his grace, *Rom. 4. 5.* If the devil shall reply: but thou art a great sinner, and there is a great damnation. The believing soul will return, I am not tormented by the great damnation prepared for great sinners, but comforted by the *great salvation*; *Heb. ii. 3.* which is for the greatest and chiefest of sinners by God's grace in Jesus Christ, *1 Tim. i. 15.* If the devil shall still assault a man, to persuade him that he is a damned soul, having mispent his time and strength in the service of sin, having no good works to commend him unto God, that he may find favour from him. The believing soul will be easily able in the strength of God, when it is upon the mountain of his grace, to silence the accuser, by lying down in the lap of that God, who maketh him the object of his grace, who worketh not for justification, *Rom. iv.* but *believeth in God who justifieth sinners* in his grace, without works. And because we are justified and comforted in the court of our own consciences by grace: the spirit which is given forth in the ministry of the gospel is called a spirit of grace:  It being the work of the spirit to reveal the grace of the father for the comfort of his children; according to that of the apostle, *2 Thess. ii. 16, 17.* Our Lord Jesus Christ

*Christ himself, and God even our father, which hath loved us, and given us everlasting consolation, and good hope through grace, comfort your hearts. Here the apostle sheweth us that the saints have consolation, and that his consolation is everlasting, and that this everlasting consolation is only by grace. Go to all the true saints in the world, and ask them how they receiv'd the comforter, whether by the observation of moral precepts, or by the doctrine of grace, and they will inform you that they receiv'd him by the gospel of grace, and not by the law of works. Some saints are able to acquaint you with their own experience, and can tell you how they labour'd for holiness, to bring them to happiness, to love God, that they might assure themselves, that they were in the love of God, and that they found darkness instead of expected light, death instead of life, horror and bondage instead of joy and liberty, until they were enabled to come unto God as sinners, without works, disclaiming their own righteousness, deserts and endeavours, and laying the head-stone of their peace and happiness in the free favour of God, crying Grace, Grace, Zeck. iv. 7. Exalting the free grace of God in their justification, and overthrowing and overturning their own works and legal righteousness. It is grace, and grace alone, which bringeth salvation, Tit. ii. 11. and therefore not our works. Grace and works are inconsistent in this point of justification: they can no more stand together, than the ark of God and Dagon. Let grace stand up in its glory, and works will quickly be overthrown, and set up works, and ye destroy the doctrine of grace. By eternal grace we were elected, and made vessels of mercy from eternity; by grace we were saved before God in heaven, in the presence of the Lord Jesus: by grace we were saved in the person of Christ before faith. By the revelation of grace unto us through faith we are saved (in foro conscientia) in the court of our own consciences. By grace salvation is inchoated here, and compleated and perfected hereafter, Rom. vi. ult. The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. The word is *χαρισμα*, which signifieth a gift flowing*

ing from grace, or free favour. In these several acceptations of the word grace, *we are saved by grace.*

I might now lay down many reasons for the proof of this point, but those which I gave to prove, that we are not justified by works, will be sufficient for the confirmation of this. And when I shall handle the doctrine of believing, some reasons will fall in which will more fully illustrate this truth. I shall therefore for the present only present unto you a reason or two, and hasten to the use.

1 *Reason.* First, it being supposed that man is a sinner, it is impossible that man should be saved by any thing, *but by the knowledge of grace.*

The law in this particular, would not deal with us, considering what good hath been done by us, but what evil. And therefore when the apostle had proved, *Rom. iii. 23.* that devout *Jews*, as well as profane *Gentiles*, *had sinned, and come short of the glory of God:* he takes it for granted, as a thing undeniable and unquestionable, that we are *justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ.* And if we could bring our selves into a state of perfection, after we have once sinned, we could not be justified by that perfection in us, which is required by the law, but should be condemned for our sins, and imperfections in breaking of the law.

If a man have done good service for the commonwealth; and yet be found guilty of high-treason against the state, the law will condemn him for the treason, his good service not being available to make satisfaction to the justice of the law for this treason. So if it were possible for us to keep the law for a time, we should be condemned, if it can be proved that we have broken it at any time. Acts of obedience will not make satisfaction for acts of disobedience. We cannot satisfy the justice of the law, by doing what the law requires, if we have once broken it. If we could sometimes do what the law requires us, we should not be able to free our selves from the guilt and punishment for doing that, which it forbiddeth us at all times; because it requireth obedience from us, at all times. And it is unreasonable to think
that

that God, if he deal with us as under the law, and not under grace, should give us a pardon of our disobedience, in consideration of our obedience.

If a wife live honestly, as becomes a wife, some few years; if her husband find that she committed adultery some years before the time of her honesty and obedience, the law takes no notice at all, that she hath lived in her latter time as became a wife: but condemns her; and she must be divorced from her husband for her adulterous act committed before her obedience.

So if it were possible that we could keep the law, and do what is requir'd in it, and live under the obedience of it in every branch and point of it, yet if we have once broken the law, the law, taking no notice of our obedience, would condemn us for our disobedience. What the *Roman* historian saith of the *Roman* law, that it is (*dura & inexorabilis*) severe and inexorable, it is true of God's law, the law heareth no cry, or begging for mercy. No man shall find favour or pardon from the law, by any acts of obedience to the law, who hath once disobey'd the law.

The paying of a new debt will not make satisfaction to any man to whom an old debt is owing: so if we could pay the debt that the law requires for the present, it makes no satisfaction at all for our breaking it before, for our old debt.

By this consideration, in the first place, it will be evident to every man who hath any spiritual knowledge of the purity and justice of the law, that it is impossible for sinful man to find out any way, but the good old way of grace, to happiness and salvation.

Secondly, we are justified by grace, that God may have the glory of his grace. Man fell by pride, therefore God will not estate him in happiness, but by humbling him, by bringing him upon his knees to the throne of grace, that he may have the glory of his grace. Naturally we are full of pride, and would rise by that by which we fell: we would be made happy by works, as we are made unhappy by works. Every man that sees himself, sees how that the whole stream of corrupt nature
runs

runs this way : a man will be doing, working, and acting that he may be justified. But God will not suffer sinful man to glory before him in his own works, lest he should lose the glory of his grace, *Rom. iv. 2.* and therefore there is no salvation for us, until we lie down at the door of grace. If God enter into judgment, *no man living shall be justified in his sight, Psal. cxliii. 2.* God doth stop up all other ways to salvation, but the way of grace, that he may have the glory of his grace in justifying the objects and vessels of his grace. He formeth his people for himself, that they may be happy in himself, and with himself, and that they may *shew forth his praise, Psal. xliii. 21.* It is the mind and pleasure of God that every man should glory in himself; therefore he justifies and saves us only by that grace which is in himself. *In the Lord shall all the children of Israel be justified, and shall glory.* He maketh us objects of grace that he may receive from us, and we be enabled to give unto him, *the glory of his grace.* All the saints are brought forth standing before the throne, and singing forth this truth, *Rev. vii. 10. Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and to the Lamb.* They ascribe salvation not to their own works, merits, deservings, or worthiness, but to the grace of God and blood of the *Lamb.*

x As earthy and gross bodies cannot mount up to heaven, which is a place of purity and perfection, but they fall down by their own weight to the earth, unable to ascend thither. So our works fall down to the ground, as unable to ascend up to the place of God's purity and glory, to justify us in his sight; that salvation may be attributed only to his own grace. And he will not justify us in the court of our own consciences, we shall not read our names written in heaven, till he bring us from our own works, righteousness, performances, and endeavours, to rest upon the strong arm of his grace, that we may give him the *glory of his grace*, in our free justification and salvation.

Thirdly, God saves us by grace, because if it were not by grace, it had been needless that the Lord Jesus Christ

Christ should have been given to us : If it had been possible for man to have wrought out his own salvation by his own works, there had been no need that the son of God should have disrobed himself of his glory, and been made man like us. Why should he have lived a life of sorrow, and died a death of shame, had it been possible for us to have gotten salvation by our own works? Therefore the apostle concludes, that *if righteousness had been by the law, then Christ had dyed in vain.* And thus have I open'd to you, and shew'd you the reasons why we are saved by grace. In a word now to make a little use of it, and so I shall conclude for the present.

In the first place, that which I have deliver'd concerning the eternal grace of God, sufficiently confutes that error which is in the spirits of many men, who think that works and actings of the creature, is the cause of God's love to the creature. God doth not love us, because we love him, but we love God, because he first loved us from eternity. God loved us when we had no being in ourselves, or among any creatures, to assure us that he did not love us for any thing in us, there being nothing at all in us when God first loved us.

The love of God is not like the love of man, man loves something which he sees lovely, but God sees nothing in the object which he loves, but all the motives and arguments lie in the bosom and breast of God, which move him to love his creature. Man cannot love before he have some lovely object proposed to him, but God loves before we have either being or holiness. We believe in God, love him, and are made lovely before him in time, because he loved us before all time. The man spiritually wise doth see his happiness wrapp'd up in the eternal bowels of grace, and laid up in the everlasting bosom of unchangeable love for him. Fond therefore is their conceit, shallow their apprehension, and understandings dull, who believe that any thing done, or believed by the creature in time, can be the primary

mary cause of the creature's salvation, to whom grace was given for salvation from eternity, *2 Tim. i. 2, &c.*

This doctrine of free grace doth overthrow and annihilate the wisdom of the wise, the learning of the learned, the righteousness of him who is most righteous, and a stranger to grace. The natural man with his best sight, seeth not a righteousness beyond the righteousness of his own righteousness. As the wisdom of the spirit is foolishness to the natural man; so the wisdom of the flesh is foolishness with God. Tho' there be a spirit in a man by which he may have great knowledge and understanding in the things of nature and reason, yet it is the spirit of the Almighty which giveth understanding, *Job xxxii. 8.* Until this spirit and power from above come upon us, we call light darkness, and darkness light; sinfulness purity, purity imperfection. But when this doth enter into us, all our righteousnesses appear as filthy rags, and we are made willing to rest upon that grace for righteousness, which was given us in Christ Jesus, before the world began. *2 Tim. i. 9.* Then we clearly see the wisdom of God in shewing mercy on whom he will shew mercy, and having compassion on whom he will have compassion: Then we cannot but acknowledge, that it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy. Then the objections of carnal reason are fully answered, the acute arguments of the worldly wise and learned, against free grace, are dissolved, the sophisms of the antigratians are sufficiently confuted, and we are saved and satisfied with the glorious discoveries of God's eternal grace in Christ Jesus.

Again, this should engage us all, that know this saving grace to exalt and extol this grace of our heavenly Father. Grace apprehended by us doth oblige us unto thankfulness. It is fit that they should glorify God for his grace, who see themselves glorified by grace. The prophet *Isaiab* setteth forth this unto us, *Isa. xlv. last, In Jehovah shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory.* He that is justified in the grace of *Jehovah* will certainly glory in the grace of *Jehovah*. Let us therefore
glory,

glory, not in ourselves, not in our labours, sufferings, actings or endeavours, but in this grace of the father, according to the advice of the prophet *Jeremiah*, ix. 23, 24. *Thus saith the Lord, let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might; let not the rich man glory in his riches; but let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me; that I am the Lord, which exercise loving kindness, judgment and righteousness in the earth.* Let our holy boasting be in this righteousness; let the resolution of the sweet finger of *Israel* be the resolution of every one of us, *Psal.* lxxi. 16. *I will make mention of thy righteousness, even of thine only.* God forbid, saith *St. Paul*, that I should glory in any thing, save the cross of the Lord *Jesus Christ*. So let every good Christian say, God forbid that I should glory save in the grace of God; let pharisees and hypocrites boast of their own works and legal righteousness. But let true saints boast only of the grace of the merciful and favourable *Jehovah*. What is ingenuously acknowledged concerning himself, by *Paul*, 1 *Cor.* xv. 10. *By the grace of God I am what I am;* may be acknowledged by all saints. By grace we are what we are, and therefore glory is to be given to grace. God's gracious love was placed upon us before we were lovely, *Jer.* xxxi. 3. *He loved us with an everlasting love.* He loved us when we were unlovely, when he saw us polluted in our blood, then was the time of his love, *Ezek.* xvi. 6. 8. His grace and love hath made us lovely: what cause then is there, that we should glory in this grace and love? It is an excellent speech of *Bernard* to this purpose (*Tibi illibata maneat gloria, meum benè agitur si pacem habuero.*) Take thou-all the glory, it is enough for us, that we have the peace. In *Psal.* cxxx. 3. the Psalmist professeth that if the Lord should mark iniquities, no man should be able to stand before him. *If thou Lord shouldst mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand?* The interrogation is equivalent to a negation, *who shall stand?* that is, no man shall stand. We, that should quickly fall to ruin, had we no better ground to stand upon than our own works, what reason have we
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to bless God for grace, who only stand by grace?

If we could stand before the judgement seat of God, standing cloathed in the menstruous rags of our own works, righteousness and performances, there were some ground for us to glory in our own works: but seeing it is thus, that if God enter into judgment, and deal with us by the Law, we cannot stand before him, therefore let us glory only in him. With heart and tongue give him praise for what he hath done for thee by his grace, who hath cause to be ashamed for what thou hast done against his grace.

The apostle hath an high expression to raise our spirits, to this purpose, *2 Cor. ii. 14. Now thanks be to God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ.* When men triumph there is great joy, rejoicing and shouting. We are not only to rejoice in his grace, but we should triumph in it. A christian may ride in a chariot of triumph every day; he may see his sins, curse, hell and damnation subdued, and overcome, when he beholds God in the looking-glass of his own grace. What though we have many sins? yet for all this we may triumph, because the grace of God hath saved us from our sins by Christ. What though we have no works? yet we may triumph if we know grace, there is enough for us in the fulness of grace. There is no way to peace here, or glory hereafter, but by grace. Let grace therefore be thy glory. As the apostle doth double his exhortation when he exhorteth them to rejoice, that they might double their diligence and care in practice of their duty, *Phil. iv. 4. Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again, I say rejoice.* So suffer me to double and treble my exhortation. Ye have nothing to boast in but grace, boast therefore: and again I say boast in the grace of God.

God seems, in the prophet *Isaiah*, to speak to an hypocritical proud people, and he bids them bring forth their arguments, and put him in remembrance, if there were any thing to be brought before him, for which they should be justified, *Isa. xliii. 26. Let us plead together, declare thou that thou may'st be justified:* As if he should have said. If you have any works; bring them out?

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use all your arguments, skill and rhetorick, say what you can for yourselves to plead your justification. But, to convince them that they could not stand before him with their works for justification, he puts them in mind of their sins, *Thy first father hath sinned, and thy teachers have transgressed against me*, ver. 27. to this end and purpose that they should believe what was promised in the 25th verse, that he would blot out their sins for his own sake. So it is with us, brethren, as we have heard. We cannot bring forth sufficient reasons and arguments to make good our salvation by our works. If we have nothing to comfort us but our own works, we shall have no comfort at all in his presence. Let us therefore as we are engaged, trumpet out the praise of God, for the manifestation of his rich and precious grace to us in the face of Jesus, for justification and salvation.

Thirdly, Let me exhort you to abide in the profession of grace to the end of your days; hypocrites may profess grace for a time, but true saints shall *hold fast* the doctrine of grace *to the end*, John viii. 31. *If ye continue in my word then are ye my disciples indeed.* Paul and Barnabas exhorted the religious proselytes of Antioch, Acts xiii. 43. ἐπιμένειν *to continue*, or abide in grace, look up to God for grace and power according to his promise to enable you to hold fast the truth of his grace. Let not the wise and learned of the world, cry'd up for godliness, religion, and devotion, draw you from this grace of God.

We live in dangerous, in perilous times, and there were never such underminers of grace, as have appeared in these sinful days, some that deny the Lord that bought them: But let us not be discouraged, because some, who have professed grace, have fallen from their profession, to fancy frothy notions, antichristian absurdities, and *familistical* speculations. Consider rather what the apostle affirmeth, 1 Cor. xi. 9. *that there must be heresies, &c., it is needful that there should be such, that they which are approved may be made manifest.* The devil hath his chaplains, as well as God his ministers and ambassadors. As
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some shall be sent of God to hold forth grace for the conversion of sinners, to the righteousness of the just: so some will vent their blasphemous conceits and cursed impostures to pervert men to destruction. If the good God sow good seed, the wicked one will sow tares among the wheat, Matt. xiii. 24.

When the gospel is preached with power, there are multitudes come to the profession of it, but after a while many of these fall to philosophical fancies, foolish dreams, vain fables, and idle speculations, loathing the plain gospel, the heavenly manna, as the *Israelites* did the manna that came down from heaven, this we find by experience: but let not this shake us from our steadfastness in the profession of the gospel. God hath appointed it to be so. Paul was confident that after his departure from the congregation in *Miletus*, grievous wolves would enter in among them, not sparing the flock, and that of their own selves should men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them, Acts xx. 29. If the apostle was confident in his time that it would be so, when he saw them under the pure discipline and government of Christ, under the charge of those ministers, teachers, and officers, whom the Lord Jesus Christ appointed over them, filled with those gifts of the Spirit, which were the fruit of his ascension; what wonder is it, if we meet with such?

Again, let not the abusers of grace cause you to dislike grace, or the doctrine of grace. By this the devil may take great advantage against thee for thy hurt, thou may'st have injurious thoughts of the grace of God, when thou eyeest some who abuse grace; but continue thou in grace, fall not from thy profession, nor dislike the preaching of it*, because thou observeest some who abuse the grace of God, turning it into wantonness.

* For none do, or can abuse it but such as conceive of it carnally; for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth, Rom. i. 16.

Remember that in the times of the apostle, some gospel professors did walk so contrary to the gospel, that tender-eyed Paul could not speak of them without tears in his eyes, whose end was destruction, whose God was their belly, whose glory was their shame, who minded earthly things, Phil. iii. Yet these vile wretches would talk of grace, and the doctrine of Christ, knowing nothing rightly of grace, or Christ. And Jude doth acquaint us with some in his time, that were crept in unawares, turning the grace of God into lasciviousness. And he saith that they were ordained to this condemnation, (πάσαι προγεγραμμένοι,) written down long before to this condemnation, so the word signifieth. We wonder to see a generation of men sprung up among us, that † make nothing of Christ or the father: we wonder to see men undervaluing and vilifying the grace of God, neglecting all Christian duties, and denying the word of God to be the word of God. But it was so in the apostle's times, there were such crept into their congregations: And why should it seem a strange thing unto us, that it is so now in these days of Babylonish confusion, and Egyptian darkness, seeing it was so in the bright days of light, in which the apostles lived, who prophesied, that in these latter days perilous times should come, and men should depart from the faith? That we may not stumble in our christian

† These were familists, who made light of Christ's death on the cross, under pretence of exalting the spirit's work; and there are many in this day, who under pretence of exalting the spirit's work, go about to establish their own inherent qualities, righteousness and performances, and so trample under foot the blood of the covenant; but let such observe, that the blood and spirit always go together, and can never be separated, and therefore their pretended exaltation of the spirit's work in sanctifying us in any other matter than the obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus, is only dishonouring and denying him.

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X race at these abusers and scandalizers of grace, let us know that grace is grace though men abuse it: think not, that grace is not grace because it is abused: but know that the true doctrine of grace may and must be abused by wicked and ungodly men. As the spider sucks poison where the bee sucks honey: So where the faints suck sweetness and honey, the wicked and ungodly men suck poison. Where the godly fetch all their joy and comfort, delight and refreshment, there wicked men meet with their ruin and destruction.

The ways of God's truth and grace are right, and the just and faithful shall walk safely in them, but the transgressors shall fall therein, Hosea xiv. 9. Mark the place, and what God speaketh. In the same way in which the saint doth walk to salvation, the wicked shall stumble and fall into condemnation.

A libertine hearing the doctrine of grace sucks nothing but his bane from it. Though the word be *the savour of life unto life to them that believe*; yet is it *the savour of death unto death to some*, 2 Cor. ii. 16. I remember one faith of medicaments, that if they be given by a skilful physician, they are the helpful hands of God (*auxiliares dei manus*) but if by one that is unskilful, they are poyson. So the doctrine of grace, when it is skilfully apply'd, when the spirit of God teacheth us to make a right use of it, *it is the power of God to salvation*, as the apostle saith, *I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, which is the power of God to salvation, to every one that believeth*, Rom. i. 16. But when it is unskilfully apply'd, when the flesh only makes use of this doctrine of grace, and there is not the spirit of God to teach us to make a right use of it, we turn it into venom, and we are poison'd to our destruction. But let us not be offended at the doctrine of Christ for this. It hath been so formerly, it is so, and will be so. Nevertheless let us continue in the grace of God, and look up to God that we may continue in it.

I have one word now to speak unto those, who for the present are not apprehenders and partakers of this grace,
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and shall conclude for this present : You see it is only by grace that you are saved ; it is only grace that brings salvation to the sons and daughters of men : Therefore if God hath convinc'd you that you are sinners ; now is the day of grace : now is the day of salvation. I will shew *a short and compendious, but a true way* to happiness, happy are all you *that believe what is brought to your ears* this day concerning God's free grace. God promised to *meet his people at the mercy-seat*, Exod. xxv. which was a type of Christ, and we can never meet with God to the salvation of our souls, but by meeting with his grace in the Lord Jesus. The law is the ministry of death, it is the gospel of grace which is the ministry of life and salvation ; look therefore beyond *the law*, which is *a ministry of condemnation*, 2 Cor. Beyond thy own own righteousness, which is impurity to the eye of justice, beholding thee under the law : beyond thyself, who art an object of misery, horror, and confusion, and by a spiritual eye of God's own making, behold his grace in Christ for lost and undone sinners. Hearken to what God speaks to thee, he invites thee, exhorts thee, and beseecheth thee to be reconciled : he tells thee that thou canst not be justified by thy own works, but by his free grace, that thou art not to be saved by what thou hast done, but by what Christ hath done and suffered. Though thou hast broken the law, Jesus Christ hath kept it. *He is the end of the law for righteousness, for every one that believeth* in and by the grace of God. Behold God standing at the door of thy heart in the ministry of the gospel of grace and salvation, let the door of thy heart fly open unto him by believing, and he will feast thy soul. As Christ said to *Zaccheus*, so I may say to thee, who believest what I speak, *this day salvation is come into thine house*. God is the God of grace, therefore think not to please him by any thing but by eyeing of his grace. Christ is the son of grace, he came to reveal the grace of his father : If thou wouldest with *Simeon* take Christ and salvation in thine arms, grasp not thine own works for justification, but believe what is proclaim'd forth to the world concerning

cerning salvation only by grace. The Spirit is the Spirit of grace, and if thou believe thou shalt be assured of, and *sealed* to redemption by grace. *There is no salvation but by grace, and no apprehension of grace but by believing*, which is the next thing presented in the text to our consideration. Salvation is not by working, but believing; ye are saved by grace thro' faith. But we must be enforced to let alone the fuller enlarging of this point; until God shall give us another opportunity.



SALVATION *only by Believing.*

A T H I R D
S E R M O N

On EPHES. ii. 8.

For by Grace are ye saved thro' Faith.

Being an Extract from the Works of

Mr. JOHN SIMPSON.

O! how hard and bitter is this to natural sense and reason, that she must strip herself naked, and forsake all which she feeleth and conceiveth, and must only depend upon the BARE WORD, specially, she conceiving and feeling quite the contrary? the Lord of his mercy help us with such a faith in our necessities, and at our last end when we strive with death, Luther's divine discourses, p. 22. *

We do not separate faith from the Holy Ghost, which is the certainty itself in the WORD, and not without the WORD, but is given thro' the WORD, and not without it, Luther's divine discourses, p. 219.

To which is added,

Some useful Passages, extracted from the divine Discourses of that great Champion for the Faith, Dr. MARTIN LUTHER.

L O N D O N :

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S E R M O N III.

EPHES. ii. 8.

For by Grace are ye saved thro' Faith, &c.

IT hath already been proved unto us, that good works cannot save us. And likewise the grace of God, for the salvation of sinners without works hath presented itself unto us, with the strength, sufficiency, and glory of it. It may now be questioned by some, by what means the grace of God in Christ may be applied unto ourselves, and apprehended by us? Our apostle doth fully satisfy us concerning this, affirming that it is not through working, but believing: *Ye are saved by grace, thro' faith.*

The apostle doth not affirm that we are saved (*διὰ τῆς πίστεως, propter fidem*) for our faith; for the worth, merit, dignity, or excellency of it: But (*διὰ τῆς πίστεως, per fidem*) through faith; faith being the gift of grace, by which grace is revealed, and applied unto us. Grace is the principal cause of our justification, faith is the organ or instrument given unto us by God, for the discovery and application of his grace unto our own souls. As no rational man (when he readeth those words of our Saviour to the woman, *who was diseased with an issue of blood*, Matt. ix. 22. *Daughter be of good comfort, thy faith hath made thee whole*;) would conclude, that because our Saviour saith that her faith did make her whole, that therefore she was not made whole by Jesus Christ, as the principal cause. So no spiritual man should conclude, that we are not saved by grace as the principal cause, because the apostle saith, *we are saved thro' faith*. Desiring therefore that that crown may stand fast, which God hath set upon the head of his own grace; I shall endeavour to shew you, that we are saved by faith, or through faith. We are not saved in a way of working,

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but believing. Thus God saved and justified the father of the faithful, to teach his sons in what way they are to expect salvation. God, in a vision, informeth Abraham that he was his shield, and exceeding great reward, Gen. xv. 6. *And he believed in the Lord; and he counted it to him for righteousness.* This was the oracle of truth, which Habakkuk, standing upon his watch, received from the Lord, Hab. ii. 4. *Behold his soul, who is lifted up in him, is not upright, but the just shall live by faith.* It is by believing, and not by working, that we are made just. (*Fides justos ab injustis, non operum sed ipsa fidei lege, discernit.* Aug.) Truth doth make a difference betwixt the just and the unjust, not by the law of works, but by the law of faith. The natural man knoweth no righteousness but what is by his own works. The spiritual man doth see himself righteous in believing. Thus our Saviour directed the ignorant Jews to the right way of righteousness, when they asked him what they should do that they might work the works of God, John vi. 28. This is the work of God, saith he, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent. If any enquire after salvation, let him know it is not by works. The plain way to salvation and justification, is only by believing, Tit. ii. *The grace of God bringeth salvation, teaching us to deny all ungodliness and worldly lusts.* He doth not say, that grace in the first place, teaches us to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts: but in the first place it brings justification and salvation through believing, and then secondarily the same grace teacheth us, to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts. After we have believed for salvation, the holy spirit is given, Ephes. i. 13. In believing we enter into our rest, Heb. iv. 3. keep the year of Jubilee, and see ourselves instated in happiness. Keep a christian sabbath. It is only in believing that we are brought to the enjoyment of that felicity, which is by the grace of God, and in Jesus Christ.

The Apostles, in their epistles, do not hold forth any truth more frequently than this, Gal. v. 6. *In Jesus Christ, neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but faith which worketh by love.* And,
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Rom. v. 1. Being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through Jesus Christ our Lord. When the keeper of the prison asked Paul and Silas what he should *do to be saved*, supposing salvation was only attainable by working, they did at once discover unto him his error and blindness, and acquainted him with the soul-saving truth of the gospel, assuring him that if he believed *on the Lord Jesus, he should be saved*, Acts xvi. 31. We find not rest in our spirits by the sight of our works, love, sincerity, labours, and endeavours; but by the sight of God's grace in Christ.

Having by these places of scripture, confirmed to you this truth, I shall now amplify it, by shewing unto you more fully, how it may be in truth affirm'd, that we are saved through faith. In the first place, it is by faith, and by faith alone, not by faith joined with works, but by faith without works. I deny not, but where true faith is, works will follow, yet salvation is only through faith without works. When we are brought into the bosom of the Lord Jesus, we enter not into the bosom of his love, by our love and faith together, but by faith which produceth love. Our eyes are shut to the beholding any thing in ourselves, and the eyes of our spirits are enlightened, to behold what is in God's grace, and the Lord Jesus. Consonant to this, is Paul's sweet and comfortable conclusion, *Rom. iii. 28. We conclude that a man is justified by faith, without the deeds of the law.* Love to God and his people, is a work commanded by the law; but according to Paul's conclusion of truth, we are justified by faith, without the deeds of the law. Therefore we are justified by faith, without love to God, or his people.

When God discovers his grace to a man, for his justification, he shews him, that, as his evil works cannot bring damnation unto him, so his good works cannot be available for his justification. That assurance of God's love, which some professors have got by the sight of their own works, being never illuminated in their understandings, to behold God's grace, in the light and beams of grace, is not the true assurance of the gospel, but the deceit, and lying divination of their own spirits, concern-

ing their own happiness ; for salvation is by faith without works.

The spirit of grace is never given to comfort us, until God hath stripp'd us of our own righteousness, works, and performances, and hath brought us to the throne of grace, to be justified by free grace, without any thing in ourselves, that may make us fit for justification and salvation.

The apostle doth lay down this as a truth seconded by his own experience, and the experience of all true saints, *Gal. ii. 16.* asserting, that *a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ; even we* (saith he) *have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law, for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.* It is not (as the Papists say) that faith, which hath love joined with it, which they make the form of faith, by which we are justified, but it is by faith, without any works at all, by which we are justified, and have peace of conscience.

The second reason why it is thus by faith alone, is, because it is by grace ; unless we were justified by faith, we were not, we could not be justified by grace. This reason the apostle lays down, *Rom. iv. 16.* *Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace :* As if he should have said, unless you hold, that there is a justification by faith alone without works, you deny grace : if you will be justified by faith and works conjoined, you destroy grace. Therefore it is by faith alone that it may be by grace. When we have a true sight of grace, we see a sufficiency in that grace, to do us good for our justification and salvation, so that there is nothing needful, and necessary besides grace. In which respect *Luther* saith, that works are not necessary to justification, but pernicious to salvation : the gospel requiring faith only ; according to that of the apostle, *Gal. iii. 12.* *The law is not of faith :* the law hath nothing to do with believing, that doctrine which bids a man to believe that he may be saved, that is the doctrine of the gospel, the law biddeth us not to believe, but the
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man that doth it, shall live in it. The law bids us work, but the gospel bids us believe, not work, and believe, but believe only.

A man that truly believes, he sees not any holiness, or qualification in himself, that makes him more worthy of salvation than another man, he sees that he hath deserved damnation as well as any one, who is now in the place of torment, and yet he sees that such is the grace, the unspeakable grace of God to his poor soul that though he deserves to lie as low in hell as *Judas*, for his sin, yet he shall be raised as high as heaven, by the grace of the father, made known to him in Jesus Christ.

Brethren, if upon examination, you find that your joy, comfort, and assurance, have in the first place, proceeded from any works which you have in your selves, which make you conclude that you shall rather be saved than another man, your assurance is not a right assurance: But if your assurance be right, it is by believing that which is reported concerning the grace of God; that so salvation may be by grace.

It is possible for men to deceive themselves, in obtaining an assurance of God's love, and their happiness, (therefore I will a little digress to open this to the ignorant.) It may be thou takest comfort to thyself, by looking on works wrought by thyself, and not by looking on Christ: It may be thou conceivest, that thou lovest God, and from thence concludest, that God loveth thee, though thou hast not seen his free love to sinners; this is a bastardly assurance, brought forth by thine own lying spirit, and not the true assurance of the spirit of grace in believing. In a true assurance by faith, God hath the glory of his grace; but in this kind of assurance, God hath not the glory of his grace, therefore it is not a true assurance. Another deceiveth his soul, and thinketh he is in a good condition, because he resteth upon a promise of God. Christ saith, *Matt. xi. 28. Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.* A man doth apprehend himself to be heavy laden, and from the sight of his burden doth conclude he hath rest, and is in a good condition, but he deceiveth him-

self with a false persuasion ; for the promise is not made to the qualification of weariness, but to the comers to Jesus Christ. *Cain* was heavy laden with his sin, and it lay so heavy on him, that he concluded that the punishment was greater than he was able to bear, or else that his sin was greater than it could be forgiven, and yet died miserable without mercy. We find that the sin of *Judas* lay so heavy on him, that he repented that he had shed innocent blood, yet for all this he went to his own place.

Therefore if thy comfort and assurance come from a sight of what is in thyself, and not from the discovery of grace, as it is laid forth in the spirit of grace, thy assurance will not advantage thee in the day of wrath. Tho' God hath convinced thee of sin, and there may be some legal repentance and reformation wrought in thee, and something which thou mayst miscall a true love to God, thou canst not from the sight of these things rightly conclude that thou art in the love of God, before a discovery of free love be made forth to thee a sinner. For God doth not apply his grace or his Son to any man for justification, but through believing, that justification may evidently appear to the sons of men to be by his own grace. Which will appear, if in the third place we do more fully consider, that God doth save us thro' believing, that he may have the glory of his grace.

God, as he is glorious in his grace, by which he justifies sinners, so he will be glorify'd in the hearts and consciences of those who are justified by grace, that he may have the full glory of his grace, when he hath justified them. (*Non est quò gratia intret, ubi jam meritum occupavit*, Bern.) There is no room for the glory of God's grace, where the worthiness of our works hath filled up the place. Where the creature may have glory in his own works, there God loseth the glory of his grace. Where God doth any thing for the creature by grace, there it is not of our works, *otherwise grace is no more grace. If it be of works, then it is no more of grace, otherwise work is no more work*, Rom. xi. 6. Therefore God will not justify us in doing the works of the law,

law, in giving us a sight of any thing, that may make us more worthy of justification than other men; but he makes known his grace to us in a way of believing.

The property of faith is to empty the creature, and to discover the fulness of the creator. Our own works, they puff us up, but faith empties us. If we could be justified and saved by that which we have done, we might *boast* and rejoice in it *before God*, Rom. iv. 2. But because God will humble us, bring us low, lay us upon our faces in the dust, that we may see ourselves nothing, and see his grace all in all to us for our justification, therefore God justifies us only in believing. Faith lays the creature low, and sets the grace of God on high; that we may go to heaven admiring the grace of God to such sinners, such base and vile wretches as we are: therefore God will not justify and save us in the court of our own consciences, by the sight of our own works, but only by the sight of his own grace: thus it is said of *Abraham*, that *he stagger'd not at the promise of God by unbelief, but being strong in faith, he gave glory to God*, Rom. iv. 20. When God gives us to believe, and we stagger not at the promises of grace by unbelief; but *give credit to what he hath spoken and promised*; God hath that glory from us, that he will have from all those whom he intends to save. Unbelief robs man of his comfort, and God of his glory. By faith the creature is comforted, and the creator exalted: through faith man is emptied of self-confidences, and filled with God and his praises; therefore for this reason ~~are~~ we saved through faith.

Again, fourthly it is by faith, because it is only by believing that we behold the grace that is in God, by which he forgives sin. Man's happiness for the present doth not lie in the not having of sin, but in the grace of God not imputing sin. (*Nostra justitia est dei indulgentia.*) God's favour and indulgence is our righteousness. Thus the Psalmist doth describe the blessed man, *Psal. xxxiii. Blessed is the man, whose iniquities are pardon'd, and whose sins are cover'd.* Hierome doth sweetly paraphrase upon those words, (*Quod tegitur non videtur, quod non*

videtur non imputatur, quod non imputatur non punietur) that which is cover'd is not seen, that which is not seen is not imputed, that which is not imputed shall not be punished. But by what is it that man beholdeth himself in this happiness? it is only by believing, and therefore we are saved through faith. We cannot see a non-imputation of sin by the grace of God, but by the work of the Spirit, in an act of believing; by which we are assured, that it shall go well with our souls to all eternity. And the great controversy is decided and determined in the spirit of a man, *whether he shall be saved, or whether he shall be damned*. No other foundation can be laid, than the grace of God in Jesus Christ our Lord, 1 Cor. iii. 11. And we cannot see this foundation, that we may be built upon it, but by believing. *Moses by faith saw him that was invisible. Abraham by faith saw the day of Christ, and was glad*. As by the eye of the body we see material objects, so by the eye of faith we see spiritual objects. The philosopher saith, that prudence is (*ὄμμα τῆς ψυχῆς*) the eye of the moral man, so faith is the eye of the spiritual man. By which alone God, and the things of God are beheld. (*ἡ μόνη θεῶν ἰδεῖν συγκεχώρηται*, *Justin Martyr*.)

The sun was not changed when the blind man in the gospel, that never saw before, received his sight, and beheld it. It was the same before, and after his blindness: so Jesus Christ, the sun of righteousness, is the same yesterday, to day, and for ever in himself, and unchangeable in his love, in reference unto us. The change is only in us by faith, whom now we see, though formerly we beheld not his beauty, and because the righteousness and salvation of God is revealed by faith, *Rom. i. 17.* therefore we are saved by faith.

Fifthly, we are saved by grace, through believing: because if it were not only in an act of believing, the people of God could not have that firm, constant, and unquestionable assurance of their salvation which now they enjoy in a way of believing. When a man is to go unto a place by many several ways, which are not found out without some difficulty, he doth often doubt whether he is in the right way, or whether he is out of his

his way ; but when he is to go in one plain way, he is confident that he is not out of his way. So when a man goeth by the way of the law, and works for justification, he is in doubt whether he is in his right way for justification, the law pointing out many ways, and requiring many duties of him, that would be justified under it ; but the gospel pointeth only at Christ, and faith in him, for justification, so that those who walk in this way for justification, are confident that they are in the right way. The apostle doth lay down this plainly, *Rom. iv. 16.* where he saith, *it is by grace, and that by faith, to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed, not to that only which is of the law, but to that that is of the faith of Abraham, the father of us all.* God hath not made the promise of salvation to the seed under the law, or that do any works of the law : but he hath made the promise to be gracious to poor sinners, in believing without the works of the law, to the end the promise might be sure. If there had been any thing else requir'd beside faith, the soul would be always restless and unsatisfied. If God should tie justification to works, men would be unsatisfied, because they would doubt whether some works were not undone, and then they would doubt of their justification ; therefore God hath not promised justification to any man who doth good works, or submits to any outward ordinance, but only unto him who closeth with his grace, in a pure act of believing. For God knows that so long as there is any thing joined with faith for justification, we shall be ready to question our justification : we may observe, that such professors who are not acquainted with the gospel, are unsettled in their spirits, when they doubt which is the true government, or external ordinances of the Lord Jesus. If they doubt whether they are baptized in a right way, or manner, they doubt whether they are justified ; their comforts and assurance do vanish away, when they are not fully assured, that they know, and are obedient unto all the commandments of the Lord Jesus.

The cause of this legalness in their spirits is, because they do not see salvation firmly settled upon him that believeth.

lieveth. The spiritual man beholdeth justifying grace in believing, without his obedience to commands for external worship, and good works : and doth live joyfully and comfortably in the sight of his justification, though he knoweth that it is possible, that he may be ignorant of many things ; which other christians may have the knowledge of. And in these days of darkness, contention, confusion and disorder, what man can have solid and lasting joy, who is ignorant of free grace for justification ? If it were necessary to the assurance of justification, to know whether the *Episcopal*, *Presbyterial*, or *Independent* Government, were the ordinance of the Lord Jesus ? whether sprinkling of children, or dipping of professing believers, were the institution of Christ, in the labyrinth of the controversies of our times ? how few would attain to an assurance of their justification ? How would poor creatures be perplexed, and disquieted in their consciences ? not certainly knowing in which of these ways they should walk for their justification and salvation. But that the promise might be sure to all the seed, *Rom. iv. 16.* To those who lived in the times of the law, as well as to those who live in these times of the gospel, salvation is promised not to workers, but believers, to all true believers in all ages and places, to us who live in the time of the *Babylonish* apostacy, as well as to those who were hearers of the apostles and members of those congregations which were gather'd and governed by them.

Sixthly, by faith the grace of God in Christ is applyed unto us, and we are justified by it, as the spiritual instrument, formed by God in the spirit, for the application of Christ's benefits to our consciences. A man that lived in the time of the law, looking upon the blood of the sacrifices, did behold himself purg'd, purified, and sanctified in his flesh by it, *Heb. ix. 13.* So a sinner looking upon the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, is applyed unto him, and his conscience is *purged from dead works, to serve the living God, ver. 14.* Faith, though it be called a work, *2 Thess. i. 11.* (*ἔργον πίστεως*) yet we are not justified by it, as it is a work, or gracious quality, but as it is the hand of the Spirit, by which we receive,
and

and are made partakers of those treasures of grace, which are freely given unto us in Christ Jesus. Christ hath already done, what is to be done by way of satisfaction to the justice of his father, and hath already *made peace by the blood of his cross*, Col. i. 20. what he doth in us now, is to satisfy our consciences concerning our full redemption by him, that you in believing may be filled with peace of conscience; being persuaded that we are of the father in the son, *who by the father is made unto us, wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption*, 1 Cor. i. 30. Faith being nothing but a light coming from God and Christ, discovering God and Christ to our spirits, and uniting our spirits to God in Christ. By faith we believe what is recorded concerning the grace of God in Christ; as the prophet, to my apprehension holdeth it forth, in those expressions of his, *Isa. liii. 1. Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?* In the latter part of these words, the prophet doth interpret the former part, he believeth *the report* of God, to whom *the arm of God*, that is, his son Jesus, *is revealed*: And when a man believeth in Christ, Christ is revealed to that man: Justifying faith doth remove prevailing doubts concerning our justification; the faithful beholding the all-righteousness of free-grace, and applying to his conscience the cleansing virtue of the blood of the Lord Jesus. Faith establishing the soul, *Isa. vii. 9. If ye will not believe, surely ye shall not be established.* The soul can never be firmly settled and quieted, but by believing. Unbelief doth question and doubt of the promises of free grace for justification, but when, in the power of faith, we are carried above it, with *Abraham*, Rom. iv. 20. we stagger not *at the promise through unbelief*; but the spirit is fixed, and stands *immoveably* upon the truth of grace: God saith in the covenant of his grace, *Heb. viii. 12. I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more.* He that believeth doth *set his seal* to the truth of God, in believing the promise, *John iii. 33.* He is confident that God is faithful, who hath made this promise to the children of men: and by believing the great and
precious

precious promises of grace, he is *made partaker of the divine nature*, 2 Pet. i. 4. *By an heart of unbelief, we depart from the living God*, Heb. iii. 12. but by faith we draw near to God, and apply Christ to ourselves. An unbeliever doth not give credit to the truth of the general promises of God's grace, and so remaineth unjustified in his conscience; a believer *in faith nothing wavering*, James i. 6. doth give credit to what is reported. And the gospel cometh to him *not in word only, but in power, and the holy spirit, and in much assurance*, 1 Thes. i. 5.

Object. But some may be ready here to object this, against what I have deliver'd, that though I do acknowledge, that by faith, grace in Christ is applied unto us, yet in effect I say no more, than what I deliver'd before, when I proved, that by faith, the grace of God in Christ is first manifested, and made over unto us.

Answer. They misapprehend me, when they conclude, that I make faith only an assurance of, because I do maintain that it is the first evidence and witness of our justification. Faith doth assure, but it doth not only assure us of Christ, but doth apply Christ, and makes a difference between assurance and application, which I illustrate by this similitude. Suppose one should lie in prison for debt, his debts being paid and he not knowing it, and afterwards knowing that his debts were paid, he should rejoice in the news, and enjoy his liberty: this man doth not, by the news which he heareth, enjoy only comfort, but his liberty: so it is with us, before we believe, we lie in prison, and yet our debts are paid by Jesus Christ, when the news is brought by the spirit to the ear of the soul, we rejoice in hearing the news, but besides this, presently we enjoy our liberty, and all those riches which our surety, who hath paid our debts, hath bestowed upon us, so that by faith, tho' we are assured of God's love in the first place, yet we are not only assured, but likewise, Christ is applied unto us, we are united unto him, and do enjoy all things in him, and receive all good things from him.

We are saved by faith; because by faith we are not only enabled to believe the general truth of the gospel, con-

concerning his grace to those who believe in him ; but because thro' faith we are enabled to give credit to God's truth, and to rest upon it, *in reference and relation to ourselves.* Thus *Abraham*, who for the excellency and exemplariness of his faith, is worthily stiled *the father of the faithful*, did believe what God spake unto him, not only as a truth which might be beneficial unto others, but he looked upon Christ in reference to himself, *Gen. xv.* And saw his day, and seeing of it was glad : He looked upon God not only as a shield and great reward, but his shield and great reward.

By true faith we receive Christ, and his benefits for ourselves. *Paul* doth inform us, that his life in the flesh was by faith in the Lord Jesus, who loved him, and gave himself for him. Faith's sweetness doth lie in this, that by it we do not believe Christ to be a Saviour and righteousness, but our Saviour and righteousness. Therefore *Luther* affirmed, that the sweetness of christianity lay in pronouns. When a man can say *my Lord* and *my God*, and *my blessed Jesus*. This was the faith which the apostles preached, which will be manifest unto us, if we consider their intentions, when they exhorted men to believe. They did not intend that their hearers should believe in general, that Christ was the Saviour of the world, but that he was a Saviour to them. Thus *Paul* preached to the keeper of the prison, *Acts xvi. 31.* Believe on the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.

Lastly, we are saved through faith ; because by faith we hear the inward word of salvation. The word which soundeth to the outward ear, without this inward word, bringeth no salvation. As the philosopher told him, who reprehended him for publishing and divulging a book of philosophy, that he had published it, and he had not published it, his meaning was this, that it was so dark and mystical, that though it were published, yet it was not published to the ignorant and unlearned : so the gospel in the letter is published to men, and not published ; they hear, and do not hear ; they see, and do not see. But by faith we so hear, that our souls live by

by hearing, *Isa. lv. 3. The dead, faith our Saviour, shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live: (Fidei oculi sunt Spiritus, per quem spiritualia videntur, Cypr.)* The Spirit is an eye to a believing man, by which he seeth, and enjoyeth spiritual things: we receive not the Spirit, by hearing the law, or doing the works of the law, but *by the hearing of faith, Gal. iii. 2.* Eternal life, and salvation is by hearing the inward word of life, salvation, and grace. God bids the prophet *Ezek. xxxviii. 5. to prophesy over the dry bones, that they might live.* The Lord Jesus is the great invisible prophet, who prophesieth over dry bones, and dead-hearted sinners, and by hearing inwardly the inward word of this prophet, they live in hearing and believing: And therefore it is said, that we are saved by faith.

Having by these particulars acquainted you with my judgment, concerning our salvation through faith; I shall now by the same assistance of God's grace, draw some useful conclusions, from the premises, and so put a period to my discourse for the present.

First, this doth discover unto us the usefulness and excellency of the unfeign'd faith of the elect: As *Noah* was preserved from the destruction which came upon the old world, by going for his safety into the ark, so by the foot of faith we walk into our ark, *Christ Jesus*, for the salvation of our souls. The world of sin is a dismal wilderness, full of fiery serpents; by faith we eye *Jesus Christ*, as our brazen serpent, and set footing in the heavenly *Canaan* of God's grace, while the sinful *Sodom* of the world, is destroyed with the rain of fire and brimstone; by faith, like righteous *Lot*, we escape out of it; when with *Peter* we are ready to sink and perish in the sea of sin, by faith we touch the saving arm of the Lord Jesus, and are preserv'd; when we drink the deadly poison of sin, by faith we take in *Jesus Christ*, as *ἀντιδοχόν*, or antidote, and the deadly poison doth not hurt us; but we are miraculously preserv'd. Faith beholdeth *Christ crucify'd* before us, *Gal. iii. 2.* and evidently set forth, who hath nailed the law of works, our sin, and death to his own

own cros, and we who deserved damnation, are saved through grace. Christ is the man, who is *an hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest*; Isa. xxxii. 2. Sin is a noxious and a destroying wind; as wind in the caverns of the earth, is a cause of an earthquake; so sin is the cause of destroying earthquakes in the earthly hearts of men, but Christ is *our hiding place*, in which through believing we are safe. The devils infernal winds and blasts destroy many a soul, with which he filleth it with hellish errors, and impieties to its destruction, *Acts* v. 3. Christ filleth his people, by breathing upon them in the spirit of grace for their salvation; but Christ is a shelter from the infernal blasts of satan: And while carnal, and unbelieving men are, as a ship under sail, and the devil unto them, is as a powerful wind, violently blowing them to destruction, *Acts* xxvi. 18. Christ, by enabling his people to believe, doth blow them with the pleasant gales of his sweet spirit, to the havens of peace and safety. Though there are infectious, and destroying winds upon earth, yet there are none in heaven, so though the men of the earth, are infected with the winds of sin and satan, to their ruin; yet they who live in the heaven of God's grace by faith, Jesus Christ is a defence unto them. When darkness and tempests are in the spirits of men, from the law which they have broken, Christ, who *rebuked the tempests of the sea*, Mat. viii. 2, doth rebuke (*tempestates mentis*, Hier.) the tempests of our troubled minds and consciences; and by believing there is a great calm in the soul. Sin in the soul is like *Jonah* in the ship, which bringeth a tempest with it, but Christ, through faith, doth cast this tempest-raiser into the sea of his father's grace, and the soul is quieted, and filled with joy, and peace in believing. The philosopher saith, that logick to a rational and learned man, is the instrument of instruments, (*ὄργανον τῶν ὀργάνων*) without which he shall make little proficiency in other arts and sciences. So faith is the organ, or instrument to the spiritual man, by which he is made partaker of the wisdom and spirit of the

the Lord, in which he is to do all things, and without which he can do nothing.

Secondly, this discovers the reason why the devil and his agents do so much oppose the doctrine of faith, and the preaching of it. He is an enemy to man's salvation, and therefore he is an enemy to the doctrine of faith, through which we are saved. The devil doth what he pleaseth to those who are without faith, as being unable to resist him. Unbelieving men are like the *Israelites* without a shield, or spear to defend themselves, *Jude* v. 7. And the devil doth lead them captive at his will, *2 Tim.* ii. 26. (*ἡξω γρημμένοι*) as wild beasts are master'd and ruled by those who have taken them in a snare, or net, (so the word signifieth) but when we believe to salvation, we are furnished with power to oppose him, who seeketh our damnation; when we believe we are armed against his encounters, and fitted against his opposition. Faith is the soul's defensive shield, by which all his *fiery darts are quenched*, *Eph.* vi. 16. and therefore it is that he doth always raise opposition, persecution, and reproaches against the doctrine and professors of faith.

X Thirdly, this which hath been delivered, may be for the strengthening of the faith, and the increasing the comforts of those who have laid hold of salvation by a lively faith on Jesus Christ. Comforts are increased by the same means, by which they are wrought at the first. And therefore the apostle prayeth for the *Romans*, *that the Lord would fill them with all joy and peace in believing*, *Rom.* xv. 13. Our comforts are low, because our faith is weak. Comfort floweth in, by renewed acts of faith, or by continual believing. Satan would rob us of our comfort, *by wrestling faith, which is our shield, from us*, *Ephes.* vi. 16. And this is one way in which he doth labour to weaken the faith of the saints, by suggesting this unto the saints, *that salvation is not only through faith*. But against this temptation, and all his other fiery darts; we may hold forth this buckler of truth: *That we are saved by grace through faith*. Answer him therefore from
this

this truth, and he will be silenced; *Resist him in believing this truth, and he will flee from thee*, James iv. 7. And the spirit will fly into thy soul to comfort thee. So long as *Abraham* lived, he lived as a justified man by faith. So long as *Paul* lived, *he lived by faith in the son of God*, Gal. ii. *We die rather than live, when we are not under the power of the spirit, enabling us to believe.* We lie down either in the bed of carnal security, or fall under the bondage of the law, when we step aside from the plain doctrine of salvation by faith in our Lord Jesus. And therefore the flesh and the devil, the great enemies to a saint's comfort, do join themselves together to oppose the doctrine of faith. Satan knoweth that faith and works are inconsistent in point of justification. And when he observeth that we are in some measure convinced, that salvation is by faith; he endeavours to persuade us, that it is by faith and works; and would divide our justification between faith and works. As the harlot cried out, 1 Kings iii. 26. concerning the child, *Neither mine nor thine, but divide it*: So the devil would have us divide our justification, and attribute half of it to faith, and give the other part to works. But the believing man seeth that there is salvation in Christ, and not in any other, and that *no other name under heaven is given among men whereby they must be saved*, Acts iv. 12. And that we rest upon this name for salvation only by faith. *In Christ we have boldness and access, with confidence by the faith of him*, Eph. iii. 12. (προσῶν ἡμεῶν ἐν πίστει τοῦ κυρίου) We are manuduced and led by the hand, as it were, with persuasion of Christ's goodness to us by faith in Christ. Continue in that faith by which *Paul* was justified, who believed that Christ loved him, and gave himself for him, and thy comforts and peace shall be continued unto thee. It is *Melancthon's* observation, that the word πίστις, which we translate faith, doth most usually signify a firm assent unto a thing (*usitatissimum est πίστις pro firma ascensione dicere*) doubting is that which is contrary to faith, James i. 6. *Believe therefore strongly, and thou shalt have a strong peace*, Rom.

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Rom. v. Believe that there is no remission of sin but by God's indulgence, but believe this withal, that by him thy sins are forgiven thee (*sed adde ut credas & hoc, quod per ipsum peccata tibi donantur*, Bern.) This is the faith which bringeth peace and consolation to the soul.

By this we are brought from sin, to Christ's righteousness, from mount *Sinai*, to mount *Sion*, from the dominion of the law, to the region of grace, from bondage to liberty, from death to life, from the fear of hell, to the assurance of heaven and happiness. *Archimedes* was so delighted in the study of the *mathematicks*, that when the enemy who besieged the place where he lived, broke in unto it, he heard not the noise and shouting of the soldiers, nor the cries of the people. So the soul that by faith liveth in Jesus Christ, shall be carried above the noise and troubles of the world, and shall enjoy peace in Jesus Christ. Let us therefore wait in the heavenly *Jerusalem* for more of the spirit by faith.

In the last place, here is a foundation of salvation, for all that have ears to hear, and hearts to entertain the report, which you have heard of God's grace, which is manifested to sinners through faith. Let not any man go away with a heart of unbelief: but the Lord open your ears and hearts as he did *Lydia's*, that you may believe what is reported: For truly, if you believe what I have deliver'd, you may go away rejoicing, and assured of God's grace, beholding your names written in the book of life. The true gospel believed will remove all objections against your peace, and all doubtings out of your spirit. If as children of *Abraham*, ye believe as he did: Salvation will lie down in your bosoms, and the true God in Jesus Christ will give you an answer to whatsoever you can object and bring against your own salvation and justification. It is not the sight of sin that shall take away your comfort, but you shall rejoice that *Jesus Christ did die for sinners*: It is not the want of works that shall send you away without assurance or justification, but you shall see, that you have good right, to lay hold upon Jesus Christ, though you have no works, because he justifies

stifies none but those that have no works before justification. The true God is not a justifier of the holy and righteous, but of the ungodly. God knoweth that the wisdom of the proud flesh doth strongly perswade sinners to seek salvation in themselves and their own works. The jaylor's question, *Acts xvi. What shall I do to be saved*: And the ruler's quære, *Luke xviii. 18. What shall I do to inherit eternal life*; is in the heart of every natural man, who is perswaded that there is an eternal life. Man thinketh that as he became miserable by his evil works, that so he must be made happy by his good works. And therefore God hath given his law which requireth perfection, to bring down the pride of the flesh (*ad domandam superbiam*, Aug.) and confidence in our own works; and discovered his free favour to the worst of sinners in the gospel. God hath blocked and stopped up all other ways to life, besides the way of his grace in Christ: and hath left this way open for the worst of sinners to turn in unto it for salvation. So that as good works cannot save us without Christ, (being but glittering and gilded sins) so evil works cannot prejudice the salvation of him who cometh to Jesus Christ: as *David* in the cave of *Adullam*, *1 Sam. xxii. 2. Entertained all such who were in distress, and every one that was in debt, and every one that was discontented; and became a captain over them.* So Jesus Christ, of whom *David* was a type, doth entertain all distressed consciences, indebted sinners, discontented malefactors; and becometh the captain of their salvation, *Heb. ii.* He knoweth how unwilling impurity is to come to him, who is purity: what enemies we are to our own salvation: what fools we are to run to those who cannot help us; like *Ephraim*, who when he saw his sickness, went to the *Assyrian*, who could not heal him, *Hos. v. 13.* and therefore he publisheth proclamations of his Father's grace to poor helpless sinners: And bringeth sin-wounded miscreants out of the wilderness of sin and misery, to the heavenly *Canaan* of peace and holiness through faith in his name. He seeth that we are ready to catch hold of the law and our own works, like unto men who
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are ready to sink in the water, who will get hold of rushes or straws or any thing upon the surface of the water, which cannot save them : and therefore he reacheth forth his strong arm of salvation for to help us, and bids us to hold fast by him, and assureth us of life and salvation.

He keepeth open house, and inviteth all sorts of sinners to lay hold of the grace of his Father in him. *He beseecheth us to be reconciled to his Father, 1 Cor. v. 20.* He assureth sinners, *that whosoever will, may drink of the waters of life freely, Rev. xxii. 17.* He compareth himself to a running river, out of which every poor traveller may drink freely, no man demanding or requiring any thing for what he takes. *He doth set captives free, not for price or reward, Isa. xlv. 13.* not for their works. Though we have sold ourselves for nought, *yet he assureth us that we shall be redeemed without money or price, Isa. lii. 3.* He having paid (a λῦτρον) the price or money for our redemption, and assuring us now in his word of truth that there is salvation for us without our merits by faith in him. Therefore let those who want joy and comfort, come to the promises, and take Christ in a promise; such who have been misled, and not set in the right way to salvation and justification, let them be convinced that this is the right way, be assured of salvation by grace, Christ dying not for the righteous, but for the ungodly; be persuaded *that Jesus is not a Physician for the whole, but for the sick, Mat. ix. 12.* Sin is the soul's sickness; thou art a sinner, art sick, and may'st come to Christ, not as one that is well, but as one that is sick. Christ is a chyrurgeon that is able to cure the greatest wounds; therefore he hath set up his bills, and bids all to come, and he will reject none. We may with the woman in the gospel, spend all that we have upon other physicians, and be nothing profited. There is health for us, only by coming to Jesus Christ. Therefore if other physicians have been physicians of no value, while they have bid you seek justification and assurance in the sight of your own works, and not in the sight of God's grace : Hear this day what the Lord Christ saith

to

to your souls, he professeth *that he calleth not the righteous, but sinners to repentance.* Hear him, *Hear, I say, and thy soul shall live,* Isa. lv. 3.

I remember that some physicians have been highly commended that have been able to cure their patients speedily and safely, and without any great torment. Now the Lord Jesus Christ is a most admirable physician in these three respects.

1. He can speedily cure and heal us, whatsoever our wounds are : If there were but one wound and sore from the crown of the head to the sole of the foot; if we were made up of nothing but sin, the Lord Jesus Christ is able to cure us speedily, he is excellent in this respect. Touch him, and the bloody issue of thy soul is immediately cured. He can say to thee as once he said to *Zachæus : This day salvation is come to thy soul.* If he lay the plaister of his father's grace upon thy sinful soul, thou shalt be immediately cured. X

Secondly, Christ cures safely, there is no danger in taking that which Christ prescribes. If Christ tell you that his Father justifies ungodly ones ; and that he is the Saviour of sinners ; you may believe him, and put your life in his hand : he will not cozen and cheat as some mountebanks, that give that which kills, when they confidently promise health. If Christ promises to heal, he will give that physick which shall effectually help us. He will not give that unto us which shall hurt us. If he had thought the doctrine of grace would have hurt men, he would never have commanded it to be preached. If he had thought that the doctrine of grace would only have opened a door to libertinism and licentiousness, he would not have given his apostles commission to preach the gospel to every creature. Though men in their *carnal apprehensions* think there is danger in the medicines of Christ. Those who have had experience of him can assure you that he is a matchless physician : there is no danger in that which he gives : there is no way to salvation but by believing without working ; use this physick of his, apply this plaister to thy soul, and thou needest not to fear ; whom he cures, he cures with abundance of safety : I dare assure thee that he will heal thee. In

In the third place, physicians are commended, that cure without tormenting their patients much : And such a physician is Jesus Christ. He comforts our hearts with gospel cordials while he cures us. There is sweet comfort in the healing of the Lord Jesus Christ : he so heals thy wounds and diseases, that thou shalt have delight and comfort while he heals thy soul, and gives a plaister to thy putrified rotten spirit. The Lord Jesus Christ doth not prescribe a tormenting remedy that is worse than the disease : but when Christ heals, he comforts, he so cures, that he ravisheth the soul with joy unspeakable, and full of glory. Wherefore come to Christ, you who have spent all, and suffer'd much ; and have lain under a spirit of bondage 20 or 30 years, here is healing, look to the physician the Lord Jesus Christ ; he will cure you speedily and safely, and with delight to you. In brief, it is an easy and compendious way to heaven, when God **L** gives you believing hearts.



Passages extracted from Dr. *Martin Luther's* divine Discourses.

Of the Holy Ghost. p. 147.

WE do not separate the Holy Ghost from faith ; neither do we teach that he is against faith ; for he is the certainty itself in the word, that maketh us sure and certain of the word, so that without all wavering or doubting, we certainly believe, that it is even so and no otherwise, than as God's word saith and delivereth unto us. But the Holy Ghost is given to none without the word, (saith *Luther*) but through the word.

At the same time of this discourse, Dr. *Hennage* said to *Luther*, Sir ! where you say that the Holy Spirit is the certainty in the word towards God, that is, that
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a man is certain of his own mind and opinion; then it must needs follow, that all sects have the Holy Ghost, for they will needs be most certain of their doctrine and religion.

Hereunto *Luther* answered him, and said, *Mahomet*, the Pope, and Papists, the *Anabaptists*, and other sectaries, have no certainty at all, neither can they be sure of these things; for they depend not on God's word, but on their own righteousness; they have nothing upright, they construe and make glosses, they understand God's word according to their human and natural sense and reason. And when although they have done many and great works, yet they stand always in doubt, and must think thus, Who knoweth, whether this which we have done be pleasing to God, or no? or, whether we have done works enough or not? they must continually think with themselves, we are still unworthy, &c.

But (said *Luther*) a true and godly christian (between these two doubts) is sure and certain, and saith, I regard nothing these doubtings; I neither look upon my holiness, nor upon my unworthiness, but I believe in Jesus Christ, who is both holy and worthy; and whether I be holy or unholy, yet I am sure and certain, that Christ giveth himself (with all his holiness, worthiness, and what he is and hath) to be mine own.

Wherefore is he called a Witness? p. 150.

A Nswer: Because he beareth witness only of Christ and of none other; without this witness of the Holy Ghost concerning Christ, there is no true nor constant comfort. Therefore (said *Luther*) it resteth all on this, that we take sure hold on this text, and say, I believe in Jesus Christ, who died for me, and I know, that the Holy Ghost (who is called, and is a witness and a comforter) doth preach and witness (in Christendom) of none besides, but only of Christ, therewith to strengthen and comfort all sad and sorrowful hearts. Therein will I also remain, and will depend upon none other comfort.

Luther to Brentius. p. 213.

AND I, my loving *Brentius*, to the end I may the better understand this case, do use to think in this manner, namely, as if in my heart were no quality or virtue at all, which is called faith and love, (as the sophists do speak and dream thereof) but I set all on Christ, and say, my *formalis iustitia*, that is, my sure, my constant and compleat righteousness (in which is no want nor failing, but is, as before God it ought to be) is Christ my Lord and Saviour. To the end in such sort I may make myself free, and may work myself out of the sight of the law and of works, yea also out of the sight of that Christ, who seemeth and by me is understood to be (as it were) either a teacher, or a giver, I say, I will not know such a Christ, but I will have, that Christ himself is my gift and doctrine, and that in him I have all, as he saith, *I am the way, the truth, and the life*. He saith not, I shew or give the way, the truth, and the life, as if he wrought in me, and nevertheless were out of me elsewhere: No I will have none of that, but he shall be in me, in me he shall remain, speak, &c. to the end there be in him (in Christ) the righteousness which is acceptable before God. Farewel,

Martin Luther.

Of the Errors which the Sectaries do hold concerning the Word of God. p. 12.

BULLINGER said once in my hearing, said *Luther*, that he was earnest against the anabaptists, as contemners of God's word, and also against those which attributed too much to the literal word, for, said he, such do sin against God and his almighty power; as the Jews did in naming the ark, God. But, said he, whoso holdeth a mean between both, the same is taught what is the right use of the word and sacraments.

Whereupon, said *Luther*, I answered him and said: *Bullinger* you err, you know neither yourself, nor what you hold; I mark well your tricks and fallacies: *Zuinglius*

ius and *Oecolampadius* likewise proceeded too far in this your ungodly meaning: But when *Brentius* withstood them, they then lessened their opinions, alledging, they did not reject the literal word, but only condemned certain gross abuses. By this your error, said *Luther* to *Bullinger*, you cut in sunder and separate the word and the spirit; you separate those that preach and teach the word, from God who worketh the same; you also separate thereby the ministers that baptise, from God who commandeth it; and you think that the Holy Ghost is given and worketh without the word, which word you say, is an external sign and mark that findeth the spirit, which already and before possesseth the heart. Insomuch, according to your falsities, that if the word findeth not the spirit, but an ungodly person, then it is not God's word, whereby you define and hold the word, not according to God who speaketh it, but according as people do entertain and receive it. You will only grant that such is God's word which purifieth and bringeth peace and life; but seeing it worketh not in the ungodly, therefore it is not God's word. You teach that the outward word is like an object, or a picture, which signifieth and presenteth something; you measure the use thereof only according to the matter, like as a human creature speaketh for himself, you will not yield, that God's word is an instrument through which the Holy Ghost worketh and accomplisheth his work, and prepareth a beginning to righteousness or justification. In these errors are you drowned, so that you neither see nor understand yourselves.

A true Christian (said *Luther*) must hold for certain, and must say: that word which is delivered and preached to the wicked, to the dissemblers, and to the ungodly, is even as well God's word, as that which is preached to the good and godly upright christians. And that word, whether it produceth fruit or not, is nevertheless God's strength, which saveth all that believe thereon.

Page 13. But whereas (said *Luther*) the word produceth not fruit every where alike, but worketh severally

rally, the same is God's judgment, and his secret will which from us is hid, we ought not to desire to know it. For *the wind bloweth where it listeth*, as Christ saith, we must not grabble nor search after the same.

That God himself speaketh by his Word, and that his Word is powerful. p. 18.

IS it true (said *Luther*) that God speaks himself with us in the holy scriptures? Then thou that makest doubt thereof, must needs think in thy heart that God is a liar, and such an one that speaketh a thing and performeth it not. But thou may'st be sure, when he openeth his mouth, it is as much as three worlds. God also, with one only word did mould the whole world, *Gen. i.* In *Psal. xxxiii.* it is said; when he speaketh, it is done, when he commandeth it standeth fast.

X We must make a great difference between God's word, and the word of a man. A man's word is a little sound, which flieth into the air and soon vanisheth; but the word of God is greater than heaven and earth, yea it is greater than death and hell; for it is the power of God, and remaineth everlastingly; therefore we ought diligently to learn God's word, and we must certainly know and believe that God himself speaketh with us.

That without Faith, God himself is unprofitable. p. 222.

WHEN God speaketh a word, then we ought to believe it; for neither God himself, nor the Holy Spirit is any way profitable, but only in and by the word. What availeth it the devil (said *Luther*) that acknowledgeth God to be his Lord, whenas he believeth not that God is gracious unto him?

